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ABSTRACT

This document chronicles the experience of the National Training Institute (NTI) for Community Youth Work and four of its Building Exemplary Systems for Training Youth Workers (BEST) affiliates in establishing youth development practitioner apprenticeship (YDPA) programs. Part 1 describes the work of NTI and BEST intermediary organizations to lay the groundwork for YDPA programs and the program's preplanning phase. Part 2 discusses the research strategies and activities implemented during the program's 18-month preplanning period. Part 3 describes the national program development and management activities implemented by NTI, presents findings from a review of data reported by BEST site leaders, and describes factors that likely contributed to sites' local progress. Part 4 presents examples of innovations developed by local BEST sites. Part 5 lists key results from the planning period, presents site leaders' reflections regarding opportunities and challenges presented by the initiative, and summarizes next steps for implementation and replication of BEST YDPA programs. Part 6 offers recommendations to YDPA stakeholders. Thirteen charts/figures are included. The following items are appended: BEST YDPA study site profiles, research instruments, on-the-job training product contents, and technical assistance tools; descriptions of U.S. Department of Labor and National YDPA clearinghouse resources; and overviews of the national BEST network and

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Establishing BEST Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship Programs for Youth Workers

NATIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY YOUTH WORK

Amy L. Dawson
Keith MacAllum, Ph.D.
with Nicole Warner

March 2003

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Academy for Educational Development

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The **National Training Institute for Community Youth Work** (NTI), founded and established as an Institute of the Academy in 1997, is a national training and technical assistance intermediary that works with leaders of local intermediary organizations in America's communities to build their capacity to train youth workers in a common set of youth development concepts and practices through an array of training, education, and professional development programs.

The **National Institute for Work and Learning** (NIWL), founded in 1971 and established as an Institute of the Academy in 1988, promotes active collaboration among the institutions of work, learning, and community. NIWL gathers promising and effective practices from local partnerships and practitioners, conducts policy studies and program evaluations of publicly and privately funded initiatives, and provides technical assistance to support educational development, career development, and personal development.

The **Academy for Educational Development** (AED) is an independent, nonprofit organization founded in 1961 and committed to addressing human development needs in the United States and throughout the world through education, research, training, social marketing, policy analysis, and innovative program design and management.

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Foreword

The early 1990s witnessed burgeoning research on the factors that contribute to youth development and the potential consequences that can result from ignoring young people's talents, capacities, and interests. An array of researchers—including scientists, academic researchers, policy and research organizations, national funders, and intermediary organizations—contributed substantially to the field's understanding of important concepts and principles—such as resiliency[1], problem-free v. fully prepared[2], the window of risk and opportunity during non-school hours[3], assets[4], developmental youth outcomes[5] and many others. These concepts filtered into the consciousness of local and national leaders and into dialogues about effective policies and programs for young people.

In response, many national organizations—such as the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, National 4-H Council, National Network for Youth, YMCA of the USA, YouthBuild USA and others—began to translate youth development concepts and principles into program implementation strategies. In some states, public- and private funders coordinated efforts to make funding streams more flexible in order to support seamless or integrated local systems that gave young people access to an array of safe places, caring adults, and empowering roles. These efforts emphasized a more holistic approach to working with and supporting young people, e.g., by promoting their educational, social, emotional, physical, and psychological development, often through a single school- or community-based entry point.

Initiatives such as the AED National Training Institute for Community Youth Work's BEST Initiative (Building Exemplary Systems for Training Youth Workers) and the National Youth Employment Coalition's PEPNet Initiative (Promising and Effective Practices Network) sought to bolster local capacity for quality improvement and to codify and recognize youth development and employment program best practices.

In 1998, the establishment of 21st Century Community Learning Centers through the U.S. Department of Education and a youth component of the Workforce Investment Act contributed to the groundswell of activity directed toward improving young people's success in adolescence and their employability as adults. These public investments—coupled with increasingly sophisticated research capabilities and greater emphasis on "outcomes-based accountability" in the youth-serving sector—placed pressure on many program directors and youth workers to provide evidence of program quality and impact.

In this context, the U.S. Department of Labor (Department of Labor or DOL) began its effort to create a Youth Development Practitioner occupation and apprenticeship program initiative. In doing so, the Department of Labor intended to maximize the impact of Federal, State, and local investments and promote better outcomes for young people by zeroing in on the capacity of staff—of caring adults—to work effectively with youth. A vision statement written by DOL representatives for the initiative explained:

> *Success in delivering the extensive services outlined by WIA depends not only on the quality of program design, but on the delivery of services to youth by front-line staff. Because youth services operate at the local level and are implemented by front-line youth*

*workers, **the role of youth workers is critical** [emphasis added]. Youth workers develop relationships with young people and provide crucial expertise and support to youth as they transition to adulthood and careers.*

In establishing the Youth Development Practitioner occupation and recognizing the occupation as "apprenticeable" in 2000, the Department of Labor took bold steps toward improving the quality of WIA-funded youth programs in the short-term, and set in motion a process that will, over time, result in industry-wide standards for training the labor force of Americans who work with young people in all youth programs. DOL explained:

> *While WIA is the driving force behind our movement to create a youth worker occupation and apprenticeship, we see broad applicability for working with young people regardless of the funding source. We are seeking to upgrade the field of youth work through accreditation, training opportunities, apprenticeship and certification.*

In 2001, DOL announced the availability of seed funding for up to nine local intermediary organizations and four national organizations to develop and pilot Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship (YDPA) programs for youth workers. In addition, DOL made funds available to support a national clearinghouse for the YDPA initiative.

This report chronicles the experience of the National Training Institute for Community Youth Work (NTI) and four of its BEST affiliates in establishing Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship programs. It is a report from the planning phase and covers the period from July 1, 2001 – December 31, 2002.

As of this writing, and as a result of the work carried out by BEST site leaders during the planning period, four local intermediary organizations are poised to register and pilot BEST YDPA programs in their communities:

- Alternatives, Inc. in Hampton/Newport News, VA
- Youth Development Institute, Fund for the City of New York in New York, NY
- YouthNet of Greater Kansas City in Kansas City, MO
- Partners for a Healthier Community in Springfield, MA

Drawing upon quantitative measures of local progress, documentation of national activities, and anecdotal sharing of lessons learned in establishing BEST YDPA programs, this report is intended to help YDPA program developers and funders bring YDPAs to their communities by illuminating "what it takes" to establish national YDPA program with local affiliates.

In addition to documenting what worked well, the report describes plainly what could have been done differently. The tradeoffs to specific strategies and the rationale for key decisions are delineated, as are some original assumptions made by NTI that were never borne out.

With technical guidance from the AED National Institute for Work and Learning (NIWL), NTI asked BEST site leaders to report their progress on nearly 140 planning activities, and in some cases the cohort reported no progress at all. Follow-up interviews confirmed our suspicions that this was not due to a lack of progress in local planning; rather, in the context of their communities, BEST site leaders deemed some activities to be non-essential to local YDPA program planning.

In an initiative that has never been tried before, ferreting out what is essential, from what is not, is a complex undertaking. The BEST site leaders' reporting of their progress, and their willingness to report honestly, contributed immeasurably to this understanding.

We hope the sharing of these and other lessons learned will help future YDPA program developers streamline their planning processes and anticipate or circumvent some challenges.

Elaine Johnson
Director and Vice President
National Training Institute for Community Youth Work/AED
March 2003

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Establishing BEST Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship Programs for Youth Workers was created by the National Training Institute for Community Youth Work (NTI) of the Academy fc. Educational Development (AED) to contribute to the body of knowledge available to stakeholders at the community, state, and national levels about what it takes to train and support youth work apprentices through Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship (YDPA) programs.

The writing of this report would not have been possible without the vision, dedication, and innovative leadership provided by the staff of BEST intermediary organizations implementing BEST YDPA programs as part of this study. These individuals include: Kathy Johnson, Bernie Tennyson, and Maria Perkins from Alternatives, Inc. in Hampton/Newport News, VA; Kendall Clawson, Treena Peltier, and Frank Robinson from Partners for a Healthier Community in Springfield, MA; Jessica Mates, Steven Steltz, and Peter Kleinbard from the Youth Development Institute at the Fund for the City of New York, in New York, NY; and Deborah Craig, Deth Im, and Miguel Jaramillo from YouthNet of Greater Kansas City in Kansas City, MO.

Many local leaders—including youth workers, youth program supervisors, directors of youth-serving organizations, college representatives, local WIA board members, and funders—contributed freely their time and expertise to the conceptualization of BEST YDPA programs through their participation on local BEST YDPA planning committees in the four cities. NTI is sincerely appreciative of their expertise and participation.

In implementing the BEST YDPA initiative, NTI benefited tremendously from the technical guidance provided to our staff by representatives from the Department of Labor. These individuals include: Franchella Kendall, Office of Apprenticeship Training, Employer and Labor Services (OATELS); and Gloria Salas-Kos, Mary Rosenthal, Irene Lynn, and Evan Rosenberg of the Office of Youth Services (OYS).

The project and authorship teams included the following individuals. Amy L. Dawson, NTI Senior Program Officer, served as project manager for the national BEST YDPA Initiative and primary author of the report. Keith MacAllum, NIWL Senior Research Analyst, served as technical advisor to NTI on the research dimension of the initiative, oversaw data collection and analysis, conceived of the report's general structure, contributed to the interpretation and presentation of findings, and carefully reviewed drafts. Nicole Warner, NTI Program Associate contributed to the entry, analysis, and presentation of data; developed appendices and the index; and reviewed drafts. NIWL interns—Julie Fritts and Scott Kim—and NTI Program Associate Kelley Fitzgerald, contributed to data collection, entry, and analysis during early stages of the project. Elaine Johnson, NTI Director, provided oversight to the implementation of the national BEST YDPA Initiative and reviewed and provided feedback on drafts. Jennifer Gajdosik, NTI Program Officer, reviewed and provided feedback on drafts. Angela Thompson, NTI Administrative Coordinator, coordinated the report's production.

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Organization of the Report

Establishing BEST Apprenticeship Programs for Youth Workers is divided into six parts. Parts I and II provide primarily contextual information while Part III tells the story of what happened, why, and what NTI and BEST site leaders learned from the experience. Part IV describes local innovations emerging from the initiative, while Parts V and VI describe results, lessons learned and recommendations for future work. Throughout the report, the phrases "BEST Apprenticeship Programs" and "BEST YDPA Programs" are used interchangeably.

Part I: The National BEST YDPA Initiative describes the work of NTI and BEST intermediary organizations that provided a foundation for establishing YDPA programs, the pre-planning steps that led to participation in the DOL initiative, and the factors that contributed to local and national readiness to establish BEST YDPA programs.

Part II: The Research Dimension of the BEST YDPA Initiative describes national research strategies and activities implemented during the 18-month planning period to document "what it takes" to establish YDPA programs and to support NTI's delivery of technical assistance to BEST sites.

Part III: Establishing Local BEST YDPA Programs describes the national program development and management activities carried out by NTI, presents findings from a careful review of the quantitative and qualitative data reported by BEST site leaders, describes factors that likely contributed to the sites' local progress, and suggests some implications of these findings for YDPA program developers and funders. To ensure systematic and comprehensive presentation of findings, each subsection in Part III follows a consistent structural pattern; most readers will experience a certain cadence in reading from one subsection to the next.

Part IV: Local Innovations provides examples of unique innovations developed by BEST sites in establishing their YDPA programs.

Part V: Results, Reflections, and Next Steps lists key results from the planning period, includes site leaders' reflections related to opportunities and challenges presented by the initiative, and summarizes next steps for implementation and replication of BEST YDPA programs.

Part VI: Recommendations includes suggested topics of discussion and action by a range of YDPA stakeholders, including young people, youth workers, directors of youth-serving organizations, YDPA program developers, higher education institutions, the Department of Labor, public and private funders, and business leaders.

NTI pursues all of its work with two goals in mind:

> The first is to continue building the capacity of local communities to offer systems of training, education, and professional development for their youth workers and youth-serving sectors.
>
> The second is to contribute knowledge and innovations to the broader field by documenting processes, strategies, innovations, and lessons learned from the work done in partnership with community leaders and practitioners.

NTI's initial work to establish BEST YDPA programs with the BEST sites from July 2001 through 2003 is intended to address the first goal.

We hope this report speaks effectively to the second goal by contributing to the body of knowledge available to stakeholders at the community, state, and national levels about what it takes to train and support apprentices through Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship programs.

Part I: The National BEST YDPA Initiative

Since 1997, the National Training Institute for Community Youth Work (NTI) has worked with local youth development intermediary organizations across the country to establish professional development systems, grounded in youth development principles, for youth workers. This work contributed to NTI and BEST site leaders' rationale and readiness to participate in the U.S. Department of Labor's (Department of Labor or DOL) Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship (YDPA) Initiative, and provided a foundation for organizing the national BEST Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship Program Initiative. For contextual purposes, *Part I: The National BEST YDPA Initiative* describes the work of NTI and BEST intermediary organizations that provided a foundation for establishing YDPA programs, the pre-planning steps that led to participation in the initiative, and the factors that contributed to local and national readiness.

National Training Institute for Community Youth Work

NTI is a national training and technical assistance intermediary that works with leaders of local intermediary organizations in America's communities to build their organization's capacity to train youth workers in a common set of youth development concepts and practices through an array of training, education, and professional development programs. This work is called "BEST"—Building Exemplary Systems for Training Youth Workers.

Local BEST Systems

Under the leadership of local youth development intermediary organizations, local BEST training systems offer a variety of training programs targeting youth workers, including: in-service *Advancing Youth Development* courses in youth development concepts and principles for youth workers and youth program supervisors; college-based youth work certificate and degree programs; professional networking opportunities; and with the establishment of the youth development practitioner apprenticeship credential by the Department of Labor, apprenticeship programs for youth workers.

BEST systems are currently active in approximately 18 cities across the country and are a primary strategy through which these communities are improving the quality and impact of their youth programs. Approximately 6,500 youth workers were trained in *Advancing Youth Development* courses delivered by the national network of local BEST systems between 1997 and 2002. (See *Curriculum Overview—Advancing Youth Development* in Appendix G.)

In a two-year, comprehensive evaluation of the *Advancing Youth Development* course delivered by BEST cities, three-fourths of youth workers surveyed said that the AYD training had a "great deal" or a "good amount" of impact on how they do their job. (See *BEST Strengthens Youth Worker Practice—Key Findings* in Appendix G.) The national study found that those trained by BEST intermediary organizations had:

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- Deepened their understanding of young people and youth development;
- Shifted their youth programming focus from adult-centered to youth-centered; and
- Increased youth involvement in program development.

This is important for the purposes of apprenticeship, because NTI and BEST site leaders developed the on-the-job training component of BEST Apprenticeship Programs in a way that builds upon the proven concepts introduced in the *Advancing Youth Development* (AYD) course.

National BEST Network—A "Laboratory" for Piloting Innovations

NTI and the growing network of local BEST systems represent a national "laboratory" through which program developers, researchers, and funders can develop, test, and evaluate important innovations for the field. For example, from 1998-2000, NTI and BEST site leaders monitored the initial establishment and implementation of BEST systems and AYD training courses in the "laboratory" of 15 cities, and through this work generated new innovations for the field and created a foundation for NTI's current work to bring BEST systems to more communities. From 2000-2001, NTI field-tested *Supervising Youth Development Practice: A Facilitator's Guide for Training Supervisors of Youth Workers* in a "laboratory" of four BEST sites. (See *Curriculum Overview—Supervising Youth Development Practice* in Appendix G.) NTI later assembled results from that field test and incorporated them into a final product, which is now used by local BEST training teams to deliver training to youth program supervisors.

Rationale for Participating in the Department of Labor's YDPA Initiative

The Department of Labor's Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship initiative presented an opportunity for NTI and BEST site leaders to develop and pilot a training program targeting youth workers, as part of local BEST professional development systems. In its proposal to the Department of Labor, NTI suggested:

> *Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship Programs provide an excellent opportunity for youth workers to strengthen their professional competencies through structured learning opportunities and mentoring relationships, while building their credentials through a locally sponsored, federally recognized system.*

To spur the development of YDPA programs across the country, NTI proposed several goals for the national BEST YDPA initiative, including to:

- support the establishment of YDPA programs by four local BEST affiliates;
- carry out technical assistance activities in a way that would expedite the replication of BEST YDPA programs to additional communities after the grant period;
- establish the National BEST Network's capability to serve as a resource to DOL in its expansion of the YDPA initiative; and
- plan for the sustainability of local BEST YDPA programs.

Cohort Characteristics

Establishing a cohort of local affiliates to participate with NTI in the national initiative required a number of pre-planning steps.

In April 2001, after the Department of Labor's announcement of the availability of funding, NTI invited leaders from the national network of BEST systems to participate in a strategy discussion via conference call. The purpose of the call was to review the funding announcement with all interested BEST site leaders, discuss how NTI and BEST sites' work might connect to and support the Department of Labor's goals while strengthening local BEST systems, and identify up to five BEST intermediary organizations interested in partnering with NTI to pilot a national apprenticeship program through the BEST network. BEST sites in the National BEST Network shared (then and now) similar characteristics, including:

- a strong track record in delivering *Advancing Youth Development* courses using proven delivery formats and best practices;
- experience in establishing and implementing youth work courses and certificate programs through local higher education institutions;
- local experience and credibility as neutral conveners of individuals and organizations comprising the local youth-serving sector;
- capacity to contribute or raise resources to support planning and implementation of YDPAs; and
- a history of successful collaboration on projects and initiatives with NTI.

After consulting with their boards of directors and NTI, leaders from four BEST intermediary organizations formed an initial "study cohort" to pilot apprenticeship programs in the national BEST network. The progress and experience of these four sites form the basis for this planning period report. The intermediary organizations are briefly introduced below. (See Appendix A: BEST YDPA Study Site Profiles for more detailed descriptions.)

Hampton/Newport News BEST: The lead intermediary organization for the Hampton/Newport News BEST system in Virginia is **Alternatives, Inc. (Alternatives)**. Alternatives is a youth development intermediary organization involved in approximately 45 youth development projects in the Hampton/Newport News area. Through these initiatives, Alternatives and its partners—including community organizations, elementary and secondary schools, the school district, city government, neighborhoods and other key stakeholders—recruit young people and adults, train them to work effectively with each other, and provide opportunities for them to develop and use their capacities in meaningful ways.

Kansas City BEST: The lead intermediary organization for the Kansas City BEST system in Missouri is **YouthNet of Greater Kansas City (YouthNet)**. YouthNet works to ensure that quality youth development programs are available for children, youth, and families in the Greater Kansas City area. YouthNet engages young people, parents, youth-serving agencies, funders and other stakeholders to establish and implement a common set of standards of

quality performance for youth programs. YouthNet also provides training, educational opportunities, and a range of technical assistance to support agencies as they integrate the standards into their day-to-day operations, and is currently working in collaboration with youth-serving agencies to define a fair external monitoring and assessment process.

New York City BEST: The lead intermediary organization for the New York City BEST system is the **Youth Development Institute (YDI) of the Fund for the City of New York**. YDI works with community based organizations, schools, and government agencies toward three primary goals: to strengthen the capacity of community-based organizations to serve as an effective infrastructure of supports for youth and as advocates for a youth development agenda; to promote adoption of a youth development philosophy in public sector programs and services; and to facilitate development of innovative inter-governmental collaborations to provide neighborhood-based youth development services.

Springfield BEST: The lead intermediary organization for the Springfield BEST system in Massachusetts is **Partners for a Healthier Community (PHC)**. PHC's youth development efforts focus on replicating exemplary youth programs by building capacity through training and education services and by bringing together the city's youth service agencies to collaborate and campaign for change on behalf of children and youth.

These BEST intermediary organizations were ready and willing to assume a pioneering position in a national pilot program. Just as important, they each presented unique strengths with respect to creativity, conceptual understanding and visionary leadership. Each affiliate further recognized the need to leverage local resources for the effort. In a co-signed letter that accompanied NTI's proposal to the Department of Labor, these organizations committed to a common set of broad responsibilities, including:

- forming local interdisciplinary planning teams;
- undertaking a 12-month Apprenticeship planning and design process;
- piloting elements of YDPA Programs for 6 months;
- assigning point-of-contact and staffing responsibilities for the initiative;
- participating in NTI's national technical assistance activities;
- collecting and providing data to support national evaluation activities; and
- sharing information and lessons learned.

National Readiness

As national technical assistance intermediary for the National BEST Network from 1997 through 2001, NTI played an oversight and capacity-building role with local intermediaries to support their progress in planning, implementing and sustaining local youth worker professional development systems. NTI's core activities and capacities—developed primarily through the implementation of BEST and other national projects—provided a foundation for implementing the YDPA initiative. These capacities included:

Managing Complex Initiatives: Developing and managing national multi-city and multi-region youth worker training, education and career development initiatives

Developing Youth Worker Training Resources: Developing and disseminating competency-based curricula and training products that support in-service training and professional development for experienced youth workers and youth program supervisors

Building Local Training Capacity: Establishing national standards for training youth workers and delivering national train-the-trainer certification programs for youth worker trainers and facilitators

Developing and Disseminating New Innovations: Developing and disseminating innovations in youth worker professional development strategies to the field

NTI had worked to build its capability to deliver technical assistance on a variety of topics that related to the establishment of BEST systems, and brought this capacity to bear upon its national YDPA work. Entering into the YDPA initiative, NTI's technical expertise included areas such as establishing standards for training delivery; establishing local infrastructures for professional development; engaging stakeholders in advisory and governance roles; and documenting strategies and models for establishing partnerships between youth development intermediary organizations and higher education institutions.

NTI was accustomed to delivering technical assistance on these and other topics in a variety of formats, which were also used to support BEST sites in establishing YDPAs. These formats included:

National Meetings: Convening national technical assistance meetings that brought together representatives from local affiliates to plan, problem-solve, and exchange strategies and lessons learned

Planning Tools and Program Resources: Developing common planning tools and program resources to support effective planning and implementation, and to document innovations, lessons learned and best practices

Site Visits: Conducting on-site consultations to raise awareness and garner buy-in for local initiatives from broad-based local stakeholders and to provide specific technical guidance to local project managers and trainers

Pass-Through Grants: In some cases, passing a portion of core funding through to support BEST sites' local implementation of planning or training activities

Telephone & E-mail Support: Providing ongoing telephone and e-mail support to help local leaders address their most pressing issues and respond to local circumstances

NTI's preliminary strategy for structuring and managing the national pilot was documented in correspondence sent to all BEST sites prior to the "strategy discussion" call conducted with the national BEST network in April 2001. NTI envisioned that:

> *BEST sites would work with their existing higher education institution partner (e.g., community college) to develop the related instruction design and delivery strategy for the apprenticeship program. BEST sites would identify a subset of strong youth-serving organizations...where apprentices could fulfill the on-the-job training requirements. BEST sites would spend up to 12 months planning the on-the-job training/related instruction content and delivery strategies ... and the remaining months supporting the implementation of the local Apprenticeship Program. BEST sites would receive national technical assistance from NTI and would participate in national-level research activities.*

As described further in Part III, the structure and management of the National BEST YDPA Initiative involved ongoing discovery of the key steps and strategies required to plan for and design an apprenticeship program for youth workers, and the orchestration of national, local, and neighborhood-based leaders in moving parallel strands of work forward in order to design the National BEST Apprenticeship Program, while preparing program sponsors (BEST sites), employers, and journeyworkers to implement local BEST Apprenticeship Programs.

Part II: The Research Dimension of the BEST YDPA Initiative

In its proposal to the Department of Labor, NTI anticipated that the lessons and observations culled from a careful study of the BEST YDPA planning process would be instrumental in helping NTI and DOL representatives understand the steps and activities required to develop YDPA programs. NTI suggested that such information might also help other national and local organizations develop YDPA programs for their employees. NTI engaged the National Institute for Work and Learning (NIWL) as a technical advisor on this research component, described below.

Purpose

The purposes of the national research component were to:

- measure change and progress among local BEST sites in the study cohort;
- develop a feedback loop with local BEST sites, as a way to target and strengthen technical assistance throughout the planning period;
- document innovations and lessons learned that might benefit BEST YDPA replication sites and other prospective YDPA program sponsors; and
- explore the value of using research activities as a form of technical assistance to advance and support local planning activities.

Methodology

In consultation with the Department of Labor, NIWL developed a set of research questions to guide national research activities. These questions were designed to discover the processes and strategies that the study sites used to establish their BEST YDPA programs; the factors that contributed and inhibited successful local planning and piloting; and the dimensions of technical assistance (information, tools, resources, etc.) provided by NTI that contributed most to the establishment of BEST YDPAs locally. The data collection instruments used by NIWL to collect this informati[illegible]are described below. (See also Appendix B: BEST YDPA Research Instruments.) NIWL was mindful to keep the burden of data collection to a minimum.

Site Status Report (SSR)

This checklist of planning activities was developed based on an analysis of key documents that described the goals, steps, and processes required to establish apprenticeship programs. Resource documents included the DOL's template for National Guideline Standards, its Planning Guide for developing apprenticeship programs, and its expectations for YDPA planning and implementation as described in its funding announcement for the YDPA initiative, as well as the proposals developed by BEST site leaders to document their strategies and work plans.

During the planning period, site leaders used the Site Status Report tool to document their progress according to the following structure. There were four major **strands** of planning work—shown numbered below. Each major strand of work required up to five **dimensions** of planning activity—shown lettered below. Specific **activities** were associated with each dimension. In total, site leaders were asked to report their progress on 138 activities representing 13 planning dimensions comprising four major strands of planning work required to establish BEST YDPAs. This organizational structure provides the framework for the analysis presented in Part III. For clarity, the specific activities associated with each planning dimension are not listed below; however, they are delineated throughout Part III are also listed on the SSR instrument located in Appendix B.

Strand 1: Selecting and Preparing Participants

Dimensions:

A. Selecting and Preparing Employers

B. Selecting and Preparing Journeyworkers

C. Selecting and Preparing Related Instruction Providers

D. Selecting and Preparing Apprentices

Strand 2: Establishing a Local Infrastructure for BEST YDPA Implementation

Dimensions:

A. Engaging Local Stakeholders

B. Assessing Sector Capacity, Needs and Priorities

C. Developing A Marketing Plan

D. Developing A Program Evaluation Plan

E. Developing A Sustainability Plan

Strand 3: Developing Standards of Apprenticeship

Dimensions:

A. Developing On-the-Job Training and Related Instruction Components

B. Developing Administrative Policies and Procedures

Strand 4: Establishing Linkages to Promote Academic and Career Advancement

Dimensions:

A. Developing Academic Articulation Agreements

B. Supporting Wage Progression and Career Advancement

Site leaders completed four Site Status Reports during the planning period. They were encouraged by NIWL's evaluator to move deliberately yet swiftly through the SSR, circling numbers to indicate the status of their progress on each of the specific activities related to the 13 planning dimensions listed above. Site leaders were asked to:

Circle "1" if the activity has not taken place yet

Circle "2" if the activity is in a rudimentary stage

Circle "3" if the activity has taken place but, still needs some refining

Circle "4" if the activity is complete

The average time required to complete the SSR form was less than 15 minutes.

Technical Assistance Efficacy (TA Efficacy)

Site leaders used the TA Efficacy tool to document their opinions about the efficacy of specific technical assistance activities conducted during planning period. Site leaders completed four forms during the 18-month period. The average time required to complete each form was less than 10 minutes.

While a core set of TA activities remained consistent throughout the planning period (e.g., conference calls and individualized telephone and email contact), other activities were unique to the specific conditions and challenges the study cohort faced. Thus, for selected technical assistance activities, resources, and interactive sessions including those delivered at national technical assistance meetings, site leaders were asked to indicate whether they "strongly agreed," "agreed," "somewhat agreed," "disagreed," or "strongly disagreed" that the activity:

...Met their expectations

...Was relevant to their site's needs

...Was helpful in advancing their work locally to establish a YDPA program

Planning Activity Log

Site leaders used the Planning Activity Logs to document information about key planning activities occurring during the planning phase. Completion of these logs was optional, but strongly encouraged. The time required to complete this form varied depending upon the activity, but averaged 10 minutes. NIWL received 26 planning logs from three of the four sites during the planning period.

Phone Interviews

Two rounds of structured telephone interviews enabled NIWL and site leaders to discuss local progress and activities in greater depth. The phone interviews included standardized questions asked of all site leaders, as well as site-specific questions developed from an analysis of each site's previously completed SSR. These conversations yielded considerable qualitative data

providing rich insights into the quantitative findings reflected in the SSRs. The average length of phone interviews was 30 minutes.

Final Evaluation

Using an open-ended questionnaire consisting of 10 broad questions, site leaders documented in writing their opinions and reflections on the planning phase, particularly challenges, lessons learned, and their perspectives on the potential impact of YDPAs generally on the workforce and field. The average time required to complete this form was 30 minutes.

Data Sharing

The research activities for this initiative went beyond passively tracking progress for reporting purposes. Mechanisms to provide feedback to sites and to NTI based on emerging findings were deliberately built into the process. For example, NTI's national BEST YDPA technical assistance meetings were used to report back and discuss interim findings from the SSRs and interviews with BEST site leaders. During these discussions, BEST site leaders offered additional insights about their progress, surfaced issues that might require a different targeting of national technical assistance resources, and provided feedback on data collection activities and approaches. Regular meetings between NIWL and NTI staff promoted an ongoing, two-way exchange of critical information—including interim observations and analysis about sites' progress and activities and about the efficacy of NTI's technical assistance to site leaders—all of which enhanced NTI's ability to stay "tuned in" to local needs and priorities, fine tuning delivery of technical assistance based on objective data.

Timeline for Data Collection

The national timeline for data collection is included in *Figure 1: National BEST YDPA Timetable*. The initiative began in July 2001. Site leaders completed the first SSR in the fourth month of the initiative (October 2001) and the final SSR in the fifteenth month (September 2002). They documented their final observations and reflections about the planning period in writing during the seventeenth month of the initiative (November 2002).

Caveats

To provide readers with the clearest possible analyses of data, the findings in this report do not follow the same sequence as the questions in the data collection instruments, nor always use the original language. Readers who compare the SSR instrument located in Appendix B to the findings in this report will notice two important differences.

First, the findings in the report are presented in a different sequence than the ordering of dimensions in the SSR instrument. For example, on the SSR, dimensions related to establishing a program infrastructure are listed prior to dimensions related to selecting and preparing participants. However, in the report, the findings are presented in reverse. This is because

information about the roles of participants in BEST YDPA programs helps set the stage for understanding other aspects of YDPA implementation, including establishing an infrastructure for implementation.

Second, the specific language used to describe the planning strands, dimensions, and activities has been modified from the original SSR instrument. The revisions reflect NTI's evolving understanding about what it takes (with the benefit of hindsight) to establish BEST YDPA programs, which is probably more informative to readers than the "best guesses" made when developing the original SSR at the outset of the initiative.

It may be helpful to keep in mind that the findings are not necessarily presented in the order in which they were, or should be, implemented locally. For example, although one of the BEST site leaders' first priorities was to reach out to their local stakeholders, the presentation of findings related to "engaging local stakeholders" does not appear until after the presentation of other planning activities. Readers interested in the chronological sequence of planning activities are encouraged to refer frequently to *Figure 1: National BEST YDPA Timetable.*

Finally, a note about baseline and final data. NIWL and NTI developed the SSR instrument during the first quarter of the initiative and administered the first SSR in month four. This means that no baseline data were collected from BEST site leaders during the first month of the initiative. Therefore, the cohort's status, as reported in month four, reflects the progress BEST site leaders made during the first three months of the planning period as well as the capacity they brought to the initiative. In addition, in month 17, NIWL administered a written final evaluation instrument *only*. As a result, the quantitative gains made on activities by BEST site leaders during months 15 through 17 are not reflected in the charts depicting cohort progress.

Part III: Establishing Local BEST YDPA Programs

Part III: Establishing Local BEST YDPA Programs describes "what it took" to establish BEST YDPA programs. It begins with a summary of the national program development and management activities carried out by NTI and a description of "where the sites landed" after the planning phase. The bulk of Part III presents findings from a careful review of data collected about the cohort's progress over the planning period and suggests factors that account for the trends that emerged.

National Program Development and Management

The structure and management of the national BEST Apprenticeship Program initiative represented a complex, dynamic interaction of national, state, local, and community-based organizations and individuals over an 18-month period. NTI and BEST site leaders moved multiple strands of work forward—sometimes in sequence, sometimes simultaneously, sometimes swiftly, and other times gradually—in order to develop a national program while at the same time building local capacity for implementation. Because no other organization had designed or implemented apprenticeship programs for this occupation, NTI and the BEST sites, like the other national and local grantees working with initial seed funding from DOL, were asked to take risks, innovate, and "learn as you go." The national and local planning processes often reflected that reality.

Nevertheless, one constant that characterized the process was the shared commitment by all partners working on BEST Apprenticeship Programs to transfer knowledge, capability, and insights from the national level to the community level, and from the community level to the national level in an ongoing, dynamic process. NTI sought and received, from DOL's Offices of Youth Services (OYS) and Apprenticeship Training (OATELS), information and guidance on apprenticeship design, regulations, and implementation strategies, then transferred it to BEST intermediary organizations in ways that they could engage their local stakeholders in discussions about local priorities and realities. And similarly, BEST site leaders sought the input and involvement of local stakeholders and practitioners, and deliberately transferred their expertise and priorities to NTI, so that NTI could, in turn, incorporate this feedback into the National Guideline Standards and the national On-the-Job Training Program for BEST Apprenticeship—meanwhile keeping OYS and OATELS updated on how YDPAs were taking shape locally. From the national to the community level and back again, the partners involved in establishing BEST Apprenticeship Programs made it a priority to collect, share, and utilize the expertise that resided nationally as well as locally among BEST site leaders, local employers, college personnel, and practitioners.

In establishing the national BEST Apprenticeship Program, NTI focused its national program management and implementation activities on the areas listed on the following page.

National Collaboration and Coordination: This included participating in DOL's initiative-wide activities such as meetings and conference calls that were convened by the National YDPA Clearinghouse to facilitate resource and information sharing. (See *National YDPA Clearinghouse Resources* in Appendix E.)

National Program Certification: With technical guidance from OATELS, this included developing a common model of apprenticeship that met all Federal regulations while responding to the infrastructure, expertise, priorities, and capacities that existed locally among BEST sites and representatives of their youth-serving sectors. The model is embodied in NTI's National Guideline Standards for BEST Apprenticeship Programs, certified by the Department of Labor in February 2003. Work in this area also included providing guidance to BEST site leaders to facilitate the registration of their BEST Apprenticeship Programs by State Apprenticeship Councils (SAC) and Bureaus of Apprenticeship Training (BAT).

National On-the-Job Training Program and Products: In partnership with BEST site leaders, and drawing upon concepts from *Advancing Youth Development: A Curriculum for Training Youth Workers* and other national and local research, this included designing a national on-the-job training program and on-the-job training products that: specify the competencies that apprentices will develop; require apprentices to carry out activities designed specifically to promote their development of these competencies; prepare journeyworkers to coach, monitor, and evaluate apprentices on the job; and attach progressive wage increases to apprentices' development of specific competencies over time. As described later, BEST site leaders and their college partners developed the related instruction components of their YDPA programs with minimal national involvement.

National Technical Assistance: This included organizing national convenings, conference calls, site visits, pass-through grants (using non-DOL funds), and e-mail and phone support to promote the development of BEST sites' local capacity to plan, register, and implement apprenticeship programs and ensure that the national approach and resources reflected local priorities, expertise, and circumstances. In particular, through these various formats, NTI transferred information to BEST site leaders about the components and requirements of Federal apprenticeship programs; worked with site leaders to establish criteria for selecting employers and journeyworkers; worked in partnership with BEST site leaders to develop the National Guideline Standards and On-the-Job Training program for effective implementation locally; and facilitated BEST site leaders' connection with their Federal OATELS representatives.

National Assessment, Documentation, and Dissemination: This included engaging the National Institute for Work and Learning as a technical advisor in the development of instruments and processes to guide local planning, monitor local progress, document implementation challenges and innovations, and assess the efficacy of NTI's technical assistance in advancing BEST sites' local work.

National Outreach and Promotion: This included communicating about YDPAs generally and the BEST Apprenticeship Program specifically on Web sites and in newsletters, and through public presentations and speaking engagements.

National Accountability, Replication, and Sustainability: This included documenting overall progress in required quarterly narrative and financial reports to Department of Labor and raising funds, primarily through second round funding from the Department of Labor, to replicate and strengthen BEST Apprenticeship Programs across the country. The replication strategy (described further in Part IV) focuses on engaging the **New Haven B.E.S.T. Collaborative** in Connecticut and the **DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation** in Washington DC ("DC BEST") to implement BEST Apprenticeship Programs, and to bring BEST YDPAs to eight small- and mid-sized communities in four regions surrounding urban BEST sites implementing YDPAs. Further, second-round funding supports the participation of Chicago BEST, led by the **Youth Network Council** and Philadelphia BEST, led by the **Greater Philadelphia Federation of Settlements**, in NTI's national BEST YDPA program by aligning their Local Standards of Apprenticeship (also established during the "seed" year but outside of NTI's cohort) with the national BEST YDPA program.

The national timeline and major technical assistance activities implemented to establish BEST Apprenticeship Programs is depicted on the following page.

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Figure 1: National BEST YDPA Timetable

National BEST YDPA Program Development and Management Activities	2001						2002											
	Quarter 1			Quarter 2			Quarter 3			Quarter 4			Quarter 5			Quarter 6		
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
YDPA Grantee Collaboration																		
YDPA Grantee Calls	X		X	X			X	X	X	X		X	X		X			X
YDPA Grantee Meetings					X										X			
National YDPA Program Certification																		
Access OATELS for TA		X	X							X	X		X		X	X	X	X
Analyze Federal apprenticeship regs w/ sites			X								X		X		X			
Disseminate "Guide for Collecting Input"											X							
Local assessment period using guide												X						
Draft/edit/submit National Guideline Standards																		
National OJT Program & Products																		
Integrate competency frameworks																		
Develop indictors of competency								X										
OJT Program Committee meeting																		
Develop OJT program & product concepts																		
Local input on OJT program/product ideas																		
Draft/revise OJT Guides																X		
National Training of Journeyworkers Program																		
National BEST YDPA Marketing									X									
Marketing Committee Interviews										X								
BEST YDPA marketing strategies																		
Local input on marketing strategies																		
National BEST YDPA TA Activities																		
Cross-site and site-by-site calls		X	X	X							X	X		X		X		
National BEST YDPA TA meetings				X														
Phone/email support										X								
Site visit (1 site)													X					
Pass-thru grants (non-DOL funds, 2 sites)																		
Local BEST YDPA Activities																		
Form planning committees																		
Preliminary outreach & awareness building																		
Co-development of national program w/ NTI																		
Local assessment/review period																		
Select employers & journeyworkers																		
Develop/alion related instruction component																		
NTI/NIWL Research Activities																		
SSRs & TA Efficacy Reports				X			X				X				X	X		
Interviews and Final Eval					X				X			X						
National YDPA Promotion																		
Conferences & Speaking Engagements					X		X	X				X						
Include YDPA in Web/Newsletter		X																
DOL Funding & Reporting																		
Round 1 Funding (extended through 3/03)																		
Round 2 Funding (through 12/03)																		
Quarterly Reports to DOL				X			X			X			X			X		X

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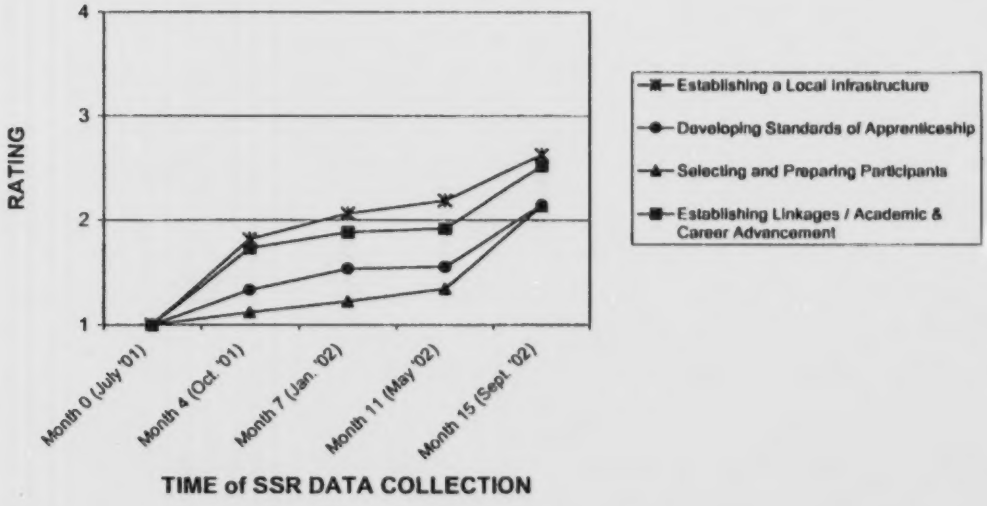
Local Status After the Planning Phase

The following chart summarizes the cohort's cumulative progress and final status in month 15 on the activities they were asked to report on during the planning period. The ratings represent the average of the scores reported by all sites on all activities associated with the major strands and dimensions of planning activity.

Chart 1:

COHORT'S OVERALL PROGRESS



Overall, the pattern of progress demonstrates the cohort's initial capacity on all strands of work entering into the initiative, incremental progress from the third through twelfth months, followed by substantial progress between months 12 and 15. The sites' status on all major strands converged in the fifteenth month, i.e., in that month their status on all strands was more tightly "grouped" than at the start or any time in between. Qualitative data indicate that the BEST sites continued to make progress between months 15 and 18.

As of month 15, the majority of sites reported their status as a "3" (the activity is nearly complete, just needs refining) or "4" (the activity is complete) on the following set of core planning and development activities. The cohort's status on these variables answers the question "Where did they land after 15 months of planning?"

Strand 1: Selecting and Preparing Participants

Employers: BEST sites defined criteria for prospective youth-serving organizations (employers), including an organizational commitment to progressive wage increases and apprentices' career advancement; conducted outreach to prospective employers; established a process for selecting employers; and selected employers to participate in the pilot.

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Journeyworkers: BEST sites developed selection criteria for journeyworkers, selected journeyworkers, and developed strategies for preparing journeyworkers.

Related Instruction Providers: BEST sites identified topics for which they could serve as training providers and identified other prospective training providers, especially college partners, for the delivery of related instruction.

Apprentices: BEST sites defined a target population of apprentices for the BEST Apprenticeship Program.

Strand 2: Infrastructure for YDPA Implementation

Staffing: BEST sites assigned responsibilities for managing the initiative to BEST site staff person(s).

Governance: The BEST lead organizations' board of directors approved incorporation of apprenticeship into their organizations' core activities and business plans.

Community Participation: BEST sites created apprenticeship program planning committees that included youth workers, youth program supervisors, youth-serving organization agency directors, faculty from colleges with youth work certificate programs, and (in the case of two sites) the WIA Board's Youth Council Chair or other Youth Council representatives.

Vision, Goals, and Work Plan: BEST sites conducted orientations for their planning committees; defined the committees' purpose, deliverables, and timetable; and developed visions for apprenticeship program and infrastructure.

Assessment of Local Needs and Capacity: BEST sites assessed apprenticeship-related needs, priorities, and capacities of youth workers, youth-serving organizations (including WIA-funded organizations), and related instruction providers.

Labor Market Research: BEST sites collected preliminary information about the local youth work labor market, particularly wage and compensation information.

Marketing and Outreach: BEST sites reviewed existing DOL marketing and promotional materials, including the Department of Labor's brochure and CD (and later, the National YDPA Clearinghouse's marketing materials); developed a database or list of local contacts to receive YDPA marketing and promotional materials; and presented apprenticeship information at local meetings with stakeholder groups.

Sustainability: BEST sites established community advisory committees to provide ongoing guidance to implementation and sustainability; and secured commitments from stakeholders to support ongoing implementation.

Strand 3: Developing Standards of Apprenticeship

Competency-Based On-the-Job Training: BEST sites developed a list of core competencies for youth development practitioner apprentices, and used the *Advancing Youth Development* core competencies for youth workers as a resource in developing the core competencies list.

Related Instruction Program: BEST sites built upon existing partnerships with higher education institutions in developing the related instruction component, including local higher education institutions with youth work certificate or degree programs; and conducted outreach to their administrators and faculty of these programs.

Written Standards of Apprenticeship: As described below, the BEST sites' progress on this activity was tied to the national timeline.

Strand 4: Establishing Linkages to Promote Academic and Career Advancement

Career Advancement: BEST sites identified ways in which the YDPA program aligned with college-based certificate and degree programs, and organized working groups with representatives from YDPAs and college-based certificate/degree programs to develop articulation plans.

In reporting the greatest progress on this collection of activities, BEST site leaders contribute to the field's understanding of what activities are most essential to complete in establishing YDPA programs. While BEST sites entered the initiative with substantial capacity to implement some activities, they faced steep learning curves and greater challenges on others. In other words, this list does not necessarily reflect what is *easy* to do; it reflects what BEST site leaders recorded as most *essential* to do.

Some activities listed in the SSR, and upon which site leaders were asked to report their progress, were later determined by NTI to be primarily national-level responsibilities, rather than local responsibilities. While BEST site leaders often served as co-developers or co-implementers with NTI on these elements, the sites were not ultimately responsible for reaching a score of "4" on these activities. This may account, in part, for the plateau of progress observed in *Chart 1: Cohort's Overall Progress* between the sixth and tenth month, the tapering of progress observed in some dimensions between the twelfth and fifteenth months, and the overall depression of the cohort's average scores and final status in the fifteenth month, despite their completion of essential planning activities.

Activities that were "discovered" to be national, rather than local responsibilities, and were completed in service of the national BEST YDPA program for all affiliates, are listed below.

On-the-Job Training Program Design and Resources: Developing a national BEST On-the-Job Training Program and associated training resources for apprentices, and (with second round funding) delivering a National Training of BEST Journeyworkers program and associated training resources for BEST Journeyworkers

National Guideline Standards for BEST Apprenticeship Programs. Developing the National Guideline Standards for BEST Apprenticeship Programs, which had to be certified by the Federal Department of Labor to indicate that BEST Apprenticeship Programs met Federal apprenticeship regulations and requirements. Once certified in month 20, the National Guideline Standards became a template for BEST site leaders to use in completing their local Standards of BEST Apprenticeship and registering their local programs with their State Apprenticeship Council or Bureau of Apprenticeship Training.

Local Program Evaluation: Different than the research activities conducted during the planning phase using SSRs, the local program evaluation component was intended to support assessment, monitoring, and reporting of BEST apprentice's progress and the overall quality and impact of BEST Apprenticeship Programs across the BEST network—once the local programs were registered and apprentices were enrolled. Work on this component began after month 15, with second-round funding from DOL.

Analysis of Local Activities and Progress

As described in the prior section, the cohort demonstrated progress in each major strand of work required to establish BEST YDPAs, including:

Strand 1: Selecting and Preparing Participants;

Strand 2: Establishing Local Infrastructure for BEST YDPA Implementation;

Strand 3: Developing Standards of Apprenticeship; and

Strand 4: Establishing Linkages to Promote Academic and Career Advancement.

This section documents the cohort's progress on the respective dimensions and activities associated with each strand. The presentation of each dimension follows a similar pattern by describing the:

Purpose for the dimension (bolded);

Activities associated with the dimension (bulleted);

Findings about the cohort's progress toward completing activities in each dimension (narrative), drawn from a review of quantitative and qualitative data; and

Implications of the findings for YDPA program developers and funders (text boxes).

This approach is intended to facilitate a systematic presentation of findings and to help readers locate information of most interest and use for their purposes.

Strand 1: Selecting and Preparing Participants

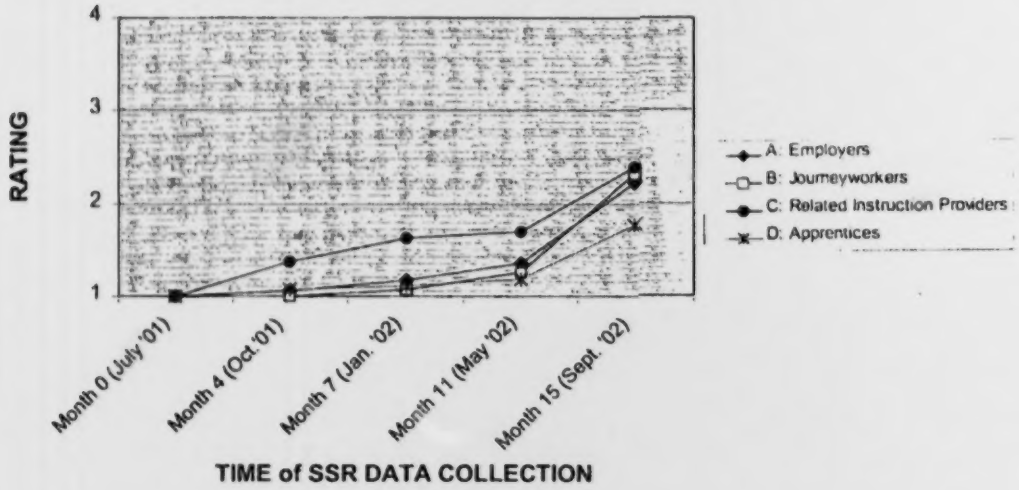
In order to select and prepare BEST YDPA participants, BEST sites were encouraged to complete activities in four dimensions, including:

A. Selecting and Preparing Employers
B. Selecting and Preparing Journeyworkers
C. Selecting and Preparing Related Instruction Providers
D. Selecting and Preparing Apprentices

The cohort's progress along these four dimensions is depicted below.

Chart 2:

SELECTING and PREPARING PARTICIPANTS



In general, the work on *Strand 1: Selecting and Preparing Participants* was gradual through month 11 and the trends lines for all dimensions except training providers are virtually indistinguishable from each other until month 15. The starting point for related instruction providers was highest, reflecting the pre-existing relationships that sites held with local colleges. The largest single gain in progress revolved around selecting and preparing journeyworkers, with notable progress occurring between months 12 and 15. NTI and BEST sites entered the initiative virtually unaware of the essential roles, responsibilities, and training needs of journeyworkers in apprenticeship programs; once into the initiative, addressing journeyworker selection and preparation became a top priority for NTI and BEST site leaders in building the capacity of local BEST YDPA programs to deliver on-the-job training. The employer and journeyworker trend lines track each other through all data collection points. This is likely because the selection and preparation of journeyworkers was dependent upon, and occurred virtually in tandem with, the selection and preparation of employers.

A. Selecting and Preparing Employers

The BEST Apprenticeship Program is an intermediary-based model, which means that the BEST intermediary organizations serve as apprenticeship program sponsors, while at the same time recruiting youth-serving organizations to serve as the actual employers of apprentices and the location for on-the-job training. As intermediaries, the BEST sites' missions relate to providing training and technical assistance to benefit all youth-serving organizations in their communities. For the most part, BEST intermediary organizations do not deliver youth programs and services to youth, so most do not employ youth workers.

The BEST Apprenticeship Program calls upon BEST site leaders to sponsor the apprenticeship program on behalf of, and in partnership with, youth-serving organizations in the community. In that capacity, BEST intermediary organizations handle overall responsibilities such as: program marketing; coordination of apprentice selection and placement; technical assistance to support effective implementation of on-the-job training within each youth-serving organization; coordination with colleges to facilitate apprentices' enrollment and participation; program evaluation and sustainability; coordination with NTI as the national program sponsor; and other intermediary responsibilities.

In BEST YDPA programs, the purpose of selecting employers is to identify youth-serving organizations with the interest and capacity to hire, train, support, and retain entry-level youth workers and journeyworkers in their agencies in order to increase the practice of a youth development approach in their agencies, increase staff retention rates, and contribute to positive outcomes for youth attending the agency's programs.

To monitor sites' progress in selecting and preparing youth-serving organizations to pilot BEST YDPA programs, NIWL asked BEST site leaders to report the extent to which they had completed the following activities:

- Established selection criteria—including commitments to progressive wage increases and apprentices' career advancement within the organization—for organizations serving as employers of journeyworkers and apprentices
- Conducted outreach and recruitment activities to reach youth-serving organizations qualified to host journeyworkers and apprentices
- Established an employer selection process and schedule
- Developed materials and protocols to support selection of employers
- Made application materials available to prospective employers
- Established record-keeping systems related to employers
- Selected employers for the pilot period
- Obtained memoranda of understanding signed by employers
- Conducted program orientation for employers

After the first six months, several sites reported progress in conducting outreach to prospective employers and in establishing criteria for selecting employers to participate in the pilot. After 10 months, one site reported that it had selected its employers for the pilot period. In month 15, the majority of sites reported that they had selected their employers to participate in the pilot. Two sites also reported modest progress toward signing memoranda of understanding with employers and conducting a program orientation for participating employers.

From the outset, NTI recommended that each BEST site work with a maximum of four employers, to keep the pilot manageable in light of limited resources and to enable sites to work out the "kinks" of the apprenticeship with a smaller number of employers before rolling it out to more youth-serving organizations. In its *Lessons Learned* document developed for the National YDPA Clearinghouse, NTI explained:

> *NTI and BEST sites established parameters around the number of employers, journeyworkers, and apprentices who would be expected to participate in the pilot. In most cases, BEST site leaders are engaging from two to four employers, and each employer is engaging one journeyworker and one apprentice. After the pilot, and depending upon available resources, participation rates are expected to increase...*

In the first and second rounds of interviews, BEST site leaders offered insight into their strategies for identifying prospective employers:

> *We've been discussing the process among the Springfield Youth Initiative organizations (40 of them) so most of the youth-serving organizations are aware of the apprenticeship initiative... But we're being careful about which organizations we approach for the pilot—only those that won't be strapped for resources. -Springfield BEST Site Leader*

> *Employers need to know that the pilot is a two-year commitment. They will need to find a qualified journeyworker within their organization that has mentoring capabilities—It's one thing to be a good worker and another to be able to mentor... Probably four agencies will be involved in the pilot, and it will be voluntary. -Kansas City BEST Site Leader*

> *The organizations we chose for the pilot were willing and had the means to take on a full-time (40-hr) apprentice. We also have a great ongoing relationship with all four employers. -Hampton/Newport News BEST Site Leader*

> *The organizations we're approaching have expressed strong interest in professional development and are large enough to make a serious commitment to it. -New York City BEST Site Leader*

A common theme emerges from these early interviews: employers must commit both time and resources to embed apprenticeship into their organizations. They need enough stable funding to cover a full time apprenticeship position and wage increases. They need at least one highly trained youth worker who is experienced in supervision and willing to assume new responsibilities as a BEST journeyworker. They must be willing to participate in decision making and problem solving with the BEST YDPA sponsor and give their journeyworker time to coordinate activities and access technical assistance from the BEST YDPA sponsor.

This suggests that DOL's national YDPA initiative is precipitating the need to fortify the infrastructure of the nation's youth-serving sector.

Many youth-serving organizations deliver programs using part-time and seasonal staff. For example, the hours of after-school programs—whether delivered by community-based organizations (CBOs), schools, or CBOs based in schools—are typically in the afternoon and early evening, but less so in the mornings. Out-of-school time programs may operate before and after school hours, as well as weekends and holidays, requiring two or more shifts of staff to provide coverage in programs. Summer programs may start gearing up in the late spring and may last until late summer, then "downsize" for the rest of the year.

In most cases, the point of these youth programs is to promote young people's development of abilities—including their intellectual development and academic abilities, social and teaming capabilities, employability, civic and cultural connection, and physical and emotional health—and to do so in a way that ensures young people's safety, promotes their sense of mastery and hope for the future, facilitates their autonomy and self-sufficiency, and contributes to their sense of self-worth and esteem.

A challenge facing directors of youth-serving organizations is to "patch" together a staffing configuration that ensures appropriate staff coverage for programs occurring during non-traditional work hours; maintains quality program delivery through the retention of high quality, well-trained staff who can consistently promote young people's development in specific outcome areas; all the while effectively managing costs on (ever-shrinking) lean budgets. Adding an apprenticeship position—which provides full-time employment and a progressive wage scale—is very attractive to many employers who have been searching for strategies and resources to train and retain staff, yet may feel "out of reach" to leaders of smaller organizations that have less formalized human resource systems and a less diversified or stable funding base.

Through informal and technical assistance conversations with BEST site leaders after month 15, NTI learned that BEST sites were nevertheless experiencing great interest and demand for the apprenticeship program from youth workers and employers despite one more challenging reality: challenging economic times. In its sixth quarterly report to DOL, NTI described factors that help account for this demand:

> *First, many directors of youth-serving organizations [in the BEST sites' networks] have likely experienced the costs of staff turnover and have for some time sought out resources and strategies for strengthening the orientation and training that they provide to their employees. These agency leaders have long recognized that having a good start in a first job (as opposed to being "thrown in") often translates into improved job satisfaction, performance, and retention. So, for many employers, the BEST Apprenticeship Program represents an answer or response to a need that they have already identified and have been working to address in their organizations.*
>
> *Second, some local employers have said that the BEST Apprenticeship Program, primarily through its on-the-job training component, will help bring clarity to what entry-level youth work actually is and can look like inside of their organizations; this also*

> *means they feel clearer about what they're paying for when they invest in hiring and training an apprentice.*
>
> *Third, because the BEST Apprenticeship Program emphasizes journeyworker training, as well as apprentice training, employers see an opportunity to access training and technical assistance for two "levels" of their organizations.*
>
> *Finally, the existence of the BEST on-the-job training products and college-based related instruction programs sends a signal to employers that NTI and BEST site leaders have invested time in creating resources that will directly benefit their staff and organizations.*

In an interview, one BEST site leader confirmed:

> *The agencies are very excited about it. They've had issues with high turnover in the past and they think of YDPA as an opportunity to invest in youth workers and try to keep them around.*

Interestingly, the cohort reported the least advancement on activities that related to formalizing the process for selecting employers, such as developing materials and protocols to support a selection process, making application materials available to interested employers, and establishing a system for documenting the selection process. The cohort's reporting of lower scores in this area is probably due to their own assessment that these activities represented an approach that was not viable or desirable for the pilot. Instead of issuing applications and requesting proposals for participation, the process for selecting employers occurred organically during the planning year. BEST site leaders surfaced, from their networks, a small number of youth-serving organizations with the capacity and track record to move forward. Recognizing that the pilot required stable, multi-year funding and more formalized human resource systems, many smaller agencies decided to postpone their participation in YDPAs, even while expressing interest in contributing to the development of the local apprenticeship program, staying informed about the pilot, and participating in future years.

Implications

Selecting and Preparing Employers

- For many directors of youth-serving organizations, YDPA programs represent a potential solution to a challenge that they've faced and have been working hard to address for some time.
- It takes stable and sufficient multi-year funding and strong organizational systems to establish and support apprentices inside of agencies, particularly during the pilot year when there are many unknowns about the roll-out of the on-the-job training and related instruction components.
- Some national YDPA program sponsors, whose local affiliates are direct providers of programs for young people (rather than local intermediary organizations), will not need to help their local affiliates select and prepare employers. Their local affiliates and local employers are one and the same.
- In reaching out to employers or affiliates, YDPA program developers will want to broadly communicate the benefits and requirements of participation in the YDPA program, so that agency directors (and their boards of directors) can accurately assess their interest and readiness to participate in the pilot year. YDPA program developers will want to reassure employers who "self-select out" initially that their input during the pilot year can strengthen the program design, and that there will be opportunities to engage more employers in future years.
- One strength of an intermediary-based approach like BEST YDPAs is that a growing number of youth-serving organizations (and staff) can participate in the same YDPA program and benefit from its opportunities and resources, but are not expected to establish their own infrastructure for managing the overall program. Provided funding is available, the intermediary organization can handle overall program administration and management responsibilities on behalf of participating employers.
- There are tradeoffs to limiting the participation rate—of employers, apprentices, and journeyworkers—in the pilot year. All YDPA stakeholders are likely in agreement that high participation rates are important goals for any program. But equally important is ensuring a high quality experience for participants in the first year, so that their accomplishments and testimonials can translate into greater demand for the program and so that program sponsors are ready to respond to increasing demand when it occurs. YDPA program developers who take a capacity-building approach and limit enrollment will need to find other indicators of success and impact—beyond enrollment rates—to communicate the substantial "return on investment" achieved in the pilot year. And, they will need to communicate how the capacity established during the pilot year will translate into growing rates of participation over time.

B. Selecting and Preparing Journeyworkers

The purpose of selecting and preparing journeyworkers is to ensure that there is capacity inside of youth-serving organizations to manage and provide on-the-job training to apprentices. To monitor sites' progress in this area, NIWL asked BEST site leaders to report the extent to which they had completed the following activities:

- Developed selection criteria for journeyworkers
- Established journeyworker selection process and schedule
- Developed application materials and interview protocols for journeyworkers
- Made application materials available to journeyworker candidates
- Established record-keeping systems related to journeyworkers
- Selected journeyworkers for pilot period
- Provided program orientation for journeyworkers
- Developed training program for participating journeyworkers
- Conducted training program for participating journeyworkers
- Established schedule of debriefing sessions for journeyworkers
- Developed strategies for train-the-trainer system for delivery of on-the-job training

After six months, two sites in the cohort reported rudimentary progress in developing selection criteria for journeyworkers, and in month 11 these sites and one more reported further progress. During interviews, each site team described its intentions:

> *We plan to target supervisors and managers of youth programs to serve as journeyworkers.... The journeyworkers [participating in the pilot] will already have an understanding of the AYD curriculum, but they will need to develop a strong understanding of the Standards of Apprenticeship. –Springfield BEST Site Leader*
>
> *We will need to clearly define the role and provide tools for the journeyworker... The journeyworkers must also have organizational support. They need to know that the role is seen as beneficial and valued by their organizations.*
> *–Hampton/Newport News BEST Site Leader*
>
> *We'll begin with folks in the agencies who are in supervisory roles. We may recommend people, but we're mostly leaving it up to the agency to determine which supervisors become journeyworkers. The journeyworkers must be trained in identifying skills and coaching apprentices – that is, providing guidance, not being punitive. They will need to look at the opportunity to coach apprentices as a serious thing, and not just look at the apprentice as an extra set of hands. We will make sure the supervisors are fully trained in AYD and will bring journeyworkers together to share experiences and learn from each other. Being a journeyworker gives them an opportunity to test a new supervisory role*

and develop new skills, but it will take commitment from supervisors and agencies to make time for it. –Kansas City BEST Site Leader

Within agencies, we will look to experienced people who are currently supervisors and who are willing to take on the extra role. In our existing project with [the senior college], there is an apprenticeship program that used a similar system of incorporating existing supervisors—they had success with this method. For the supervisors serving as journeyworkers, it is an opportunity for them to stretch and take on a new role, and for them to "grow" in a new way. We will have to make sure we articulate these opportunities clearly... The main barrier is that the supervisors may not have the time. Giving them...incentives would be best, but at a minimum we can...provide support through a networking atmosphere. –New York City BEST Site Leader

In month 11, two sites reported progress in developing strategies for a "train-the-trainer" system for delivery of on-the-job training (OJT). Not coincidentally, these were the same sites represented on the OJT Program Committee, which conceptualized the roles and responsibilities of journeyworkers and contributed to the development of the *OJT Guide for BEST Journeyworkers*. (This work is described further in *Strand 3-A*.) Completed by NTI in month 15, the *OJT Guide for BEST Journeyworkers* defines what a journeyworker is, describes the minimum qualifications for serving as a journeyworker in BEST YDPA programs, and explains BEST journeyworkers' major areas of responsibility, and provides tools and resources that journeyworkers can use to deliver the BEST on-the-job training program.

Figure 2: Journeyworker Definition

A skilled worker. One who has fully served an apprenticeship and is a qualified worker (as distinguished from apprentice and from master worker).

A BEST journeyworker is a skilled worker who is also responsible for managing an apprentice's on-the-job training program; training, guiding, observing, and evaluating the apprentice on the job; and maintaining records relating to the apprentices' job performance.

In BEST apprenticeship programs, the minimum qualifications for BEST journeyworkers are: two years experience (and preferably five) as an apprentice or youth program assistant; one year experience (and preferably three) as a supervisor and/or program coordinator; and completed a 28-hour *Advancing Youth Development* course (preferably, a certificate or degree program co-sponsored by the BEST intermediary organization).

The local BEST Apprenticeship Selection Committee selects qualified individuals to serve as BEST journeyworkers in BEST Apprenticeship Programs.

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Figure 3: BEST Journeyworker Tasks

In BEST Apprenticeship Programs, journeyworkers are responsible for these tasks:

- Recognizing apprentices' learning styles
- Making training plans for every two-week OJT period
- Motivating the apprentice
- Explaining and demonstrating techniques and best practices
- Coaching the apprentice
- Observing the apprentice while s/he works with young people
- Assessing the apprentice's proficiency and development of competencies
- Keeping notes and records
- Accessing support and resources from the BEST intermediary organization, and sharing lessons learned and strategies with other journeyworkers

In month 15, the majority of sites reported that they had, in partnership with employers, selected journeyworkers to participate in the pilot.

In month 16, using second-round funding from the Department of Labor, NTI delivered a national Training of Journeyworkers Program (TOJW) in Washington, DC for BEST site leaders and selected journeyworkers. The TOJW Program introduced participants to journeyworker roles and responsibilities, oriented them to the *OJT Guide for BEST Journeyworkers*, and provided opportunities for participants to practice journeyworker tasks. Participants in the TOJW offered feedback about what they found most useful during the program:

> *I found it helpful to be in the room with people who knew "why" they were in the room. Site leaders did a good job recruiting journeyworkers and preparing them in advance.*
>
> *Receiving information on this being a national initiative was helpful. It inspires me that I can affect change on a national level.*
>
> *The OJT Guide did a good job of organizing the bucket of skills and knowledge that an apprentice needs. The combination of reflection exercises, content, worksheets, etc., make it a very useful tool.*
>
> *It was helpful to get into the journeyworker or'apprentices' shoes and to get feedback from peers.*

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The session on observation and assessment helped me understanding the power of and challenge of observation...

The meeting created a sense of being on the same page by all attendees and sites. I feel really informed and motivated for YDPA implementation.

BEST site leaders reported the least progress on activities related to establishing a formal process for selecting journeyworkers, including developing and distributing application materials and establishing record-keeping systems. In BEST Apprenticeship Programs, employers play a central role in identifying individuals within their organizations to serve as journeyworkers. A community-wide application and selection process for journeyworkers ultimately did not make sense from a local perspective, hence it is understandable that BEST site leaders reported little progress on these activities.

Implications

Selecting and Preparing Journeyworkers

- The impact of on-the-job training and the quality of an apprentice's day-to-day work experience hinge to great extent on the journeyworker. Who is selected to provide on-the-job training and supervision, how they are prepared, and how they are supported within their agencies are critical factors in ensuring the impact of a YDPA program on apprentices' development and their practices with young people.

- Providing on-the-job training to apprentices, in the context of a youth program, is complex business. Coaching, supervising, training, explaining, troubleshooting, observing, evaluating, and keeping records—even while managing one's own regular work load—would be a daunting set of responsibilities for even the most seasoned workers. Finding individuals who demonstrate the array of capabilities needed to fulfill journeyworker responsibilities may be more challenging than first imagined.

- A role shift that many YDPA journeyworkers may find especially challenging, even unsettling, is their responsibility to evaluate—beyond mentor and coach—the apprentice. The journeyworker's evaluation of an apprentice will influence the apprentice's wage rate and become a major factor in determining whether an apprentice completes the program and receives a credential. In NTI and BEST sites' experience at the national TOJW program, journeyworkers see this as an awesome responsibility that they take very seriously.

- Other than requiring a reasonable ratio of apprentices to journeyworkers (it is 1:1 in BEST YDPA programs), the Federal regulations related to apprenticeship are virtually silent on journeyworker selection and preparation. For this reason, YDPA program developers and funders may underestimate the time and resources needed to adequately address this priority. YDPA program developers will want to plan, and funders will want to invest in, activities that recognize and support the centrality of journeyworkers in YDPA implementation.

- It is especially important to provide participation incentives for employers and journeyworkers, ensure journeyworkers' participation in training programs that prepare them for their roles, and ensure employers' and journeyworkers' access to technical resources and support as they manage and troubleshoot day-to-day issues.

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C. Selecting and Preparing Related Instruction Providers

The purpose of selecting and preparing related instruction providers is to make high quality courses and other technical training opportunities available to apprentices so that they can fulfill the related instruction requirements of YDPA programs. To monitor sites' progress in this area, NIWL asked BEST site leaders to report the extent to which they had completed the following activities:

- Identified topics for which BEST sites can serve as related instruction providers
- Identified other prospective training providers for delivery of related instruction
- Built upon existing partnerships with higher education institutions
- Conducted outreach/marketing to prospective related instruction providers
- Developed selection criteria for related instruction providers
- Established training provider selection process and schedule
- Selected qualified related instruction providers
- Negotiated training agreements with selected related instruction providers
- Established record-keeping systems related to related instruction providers
- Developed strategies for a train-the-trainer system for related instruction

The cohort started and ended the planning period with greater capacity to select and prepare training providers than employers, journeyworkers, or apprentices. *As shown in Chart 2: Selecting and Preparing Participants*, the sites reported steady, if gradual progress for most of the planning period and a "leap" in final months. (See *Strand 3-A* and *Strand 4-A* for more information about the content of related instruction.)

In month three, BEST sites reported progress in identifying topics for which they—as local training intermediaries—could serve as training providers and in building upon existing partnerships with higher education institutions. The sites' early advancement in these areas reflects the capacity they brought *to* the initiative as trainers in *Advancing Youth Development* and other courses and as co-sponsors of youth work courses and certificate programs with their local college partners.

After six months, site leaders reported modest gains in conducting outreach to prospective training partners, and two sites reported progress toward selecting their training providers. By month 15, BEST site leaders selected the following colleges as training providers for the BEST YDPA program pilot:

- **Thomas Nelson Community College**; Department of Business, Public Services, and Social Sciences; Human Services Division; Hampton Campus (Hampton, VA)
- **Metropolitan Community Colleges**; Human Services Department; Penn Valley Campus (Kansas City, MO)
- John F. Kennedy Jr. Institute for Worker Education, **City University of New York**, New York City Technical College and Lehman College (New York, NY)
- **Springfield Technical Community College** and **Springfield College** (Springfield, MA)

Although the national BEST Apprenticeship Program calls for the delivery of related instruction through colleges, some BEST site leaders remained interested in identifying alternative or supplemental ways for apprentices to complete a portion of these requirements, especially when certain subject areas were not addressed in college offerings. Several BEST site leaders documented their interest in coordinating with WIA, technical preparation (tech prep), and nonprofit management training programs to enroll apprentices in courses or workshops meeting related instruction requirements.

The cohort reported the least progress on activities related to administering a formal process for selecting and preparing related instruction providers—preferring instead to build on existing capacity with their college partners.

Implications

Selecting and Preparing Related Instruction Providers

- ➡ Higher education institutions can be valuable partners as the providers of related instruction in YDPA programs (and many have a track record in doing so for other occupations).
- ➡ When relationships are not in place between local YDPA sponsors and higher education institutions, national intermediaries may have a role to play in offering common tools, materials, and strategies to facilitate their affiliates' outreach to colleges.
- ➡ Local program developers may want or need to identify other training organizations to deliver instruction in subjects that are not offered through colleges—a process that will require additional local outreach and research.
- ➡ As described further in *Strand 4-A: Developing Academic Articulation Agreements*, apprentices who complete related instruction through colleges may be able to apply their credits toward additional credentials such as youth work certificates and degrees.

D. Selecting and Preparing Apprentices

The purpose of selecting and preparing apprentices is to attract individuals for whom the apprenticeship program and credential is a good "fit" given their prior work experience and career goals. To monitor sites' progress in this area, NIWL asked BEST site leaders to report the extent to which they had completed the following activities:

- Defined target population for apprenticeship outreach/recruitment
- Developed equal opportunity policy reflecting full and fair opportunity to apply for apprenticeship
- Conducted outreach and recruitment activities to reach target population
- Developed outreach strategies targeting secondary schools
- Developed pre-apprenticeship program for secondary school students and/or apprentice candidates requiring basic skills preparation (e.g., bridge course)
- Organized apprentice selection committee
- Developed apprentice selection criteria
- Established apprentice selection process and schedule
- Developed application materials and interview protocols
- Made application materials available, e.g., via postal mail or the Internet
- Established record-keeping systems related to apprentices
- Established enrollment policies and processes
- Developed tools and materials to facilitate enrollment
- Selected apprentices for pilot period
- Apprenticeship Agreements signed by selected apprentices
- Conducted a program orientation for apprentices

The cohort made modest gains on activities related to selecting and preparing apprentices during the first 10 months. In interviews conducted during the fifth month, BEST site leaders described their efforts to define their target populations of apprentices:

> *We expect to target a combination of high school students and people who have been working as practitioners for a few years but are not yet "established" in their careers. Because people often just fall into this field and don't know how they got there, we want to bridge the gap... For this, we will build on our relationships with the local WIA Board, because they already have strong relationships with the schools.*
> *-Springfield BEST Site Leader*

[Our program] will probably appeal to folks entering the field, who will want both work experience and academics, e.g., [graduating] high school students and others...
-Kansas City BEST Site Leader

We have a WIA project with teens (some of whom are in high school, others who are not) to provide employment opportunities in youth development. We will probably work with them to formalize a process for entering the workforce through the YDPA program. In addition, we're already working with [our senior college partner] on a credentialing program for more established workers, so we may also target this population...
-New York City BEST Site Leader

We would like to consider targeting high school students, but YDPAs are intended for those aged 18 and older. In terms of targeting people working in the field, we're not sure what advantage an apprenticeship would add that our current [training and education programs] don't already provide. The results of our market analysis will help us solidify our target population. – Hampton/Newport News BEST Site Leader

By month 15, the majority of sites reported that they had defined their target population for the apprenticeship program. The National Guideline Standards for BEST YDPA programs, drafted and distributed to BEST site leaders in month 15, included minimum qualifications for BEST apprentices that reflected local stakeholder feedback and responded to Federal regulations.

Figure 4: Minimum Qualifications for BEST Apprentices

Applicants to BEST Apprenticeship Programs shall be selected on the basis of qualifications alone, without regard to occupationally irrelevant physical requirements and in accordance with objective standards which permit review after full and fair opportunity for application. Applicants shall meet the following minimum qualifications:

- Age: Applicants must be at least eighteen (18) years.
- Education: Applicants must be high school graduates or have equivalent education. Applicants must submit a copy of their high school transcript or evidence of equivalent educational attainment such as an official report of GED test results.
- Attributes: Applicants must provide evidence of their interest in and motivation for working directly with youth.
- Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities: Applicants must demonstrate basic awareness of the purpose and requirements of the BEST Apprenticeship Program.
- Experience: Prior work experience, such as part-time or summer work, is preferred but not required.

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Overall, the cohort reported the least advancement on activities related to formal enrollment of apprentices, such as signing apprentice agreements and conducting a program orientation for apprentices. These activities could not take place until after BEST sites registered their programs with the SAC/BAT. As described in *Strand 3*, local program registration depended upon the national timeline for certifying the National Guideline Standards, which did not occur until month 20.

Implications

Selecting and Preparing Apprentices

- YDPA programs make it possible for older youth to enter the workforce in their local youth-serving sectors in a formalized way.
- Clearly defining a target audience for the YDPA program and establishing minimum qualifications for apprentices will help YDPA program developers make progress in several other planning areas, including: designing an OJT program that capitalizes on apprentices' strengths and sets reasonable expectations for their development (described further in *Strand 3-A*); establishing the minimum qualifications for apprentices; and developing marketing materials that can effectively reach the target audience (described in *Strand 2-C*). Because so many other pieces flow from defining the apprentice target population, YDPA program developers will want to make this a priority in the first few months of planning.
- Actual selection, enrollment, and orientation of apprentices will need to occur later in the planning period, once YDPA programs are registered.
- Strategies such as bridge courses and pre-apprenticeship programs that prepare older youth to enter apprenticeship once they turn 18 years will strengthen the pool of applicants for YDPA programs. In future years, YDPA program sponsors will want to consider developing pre-apprenticeship and bridge course opportunities to augment their registered YDPA programs

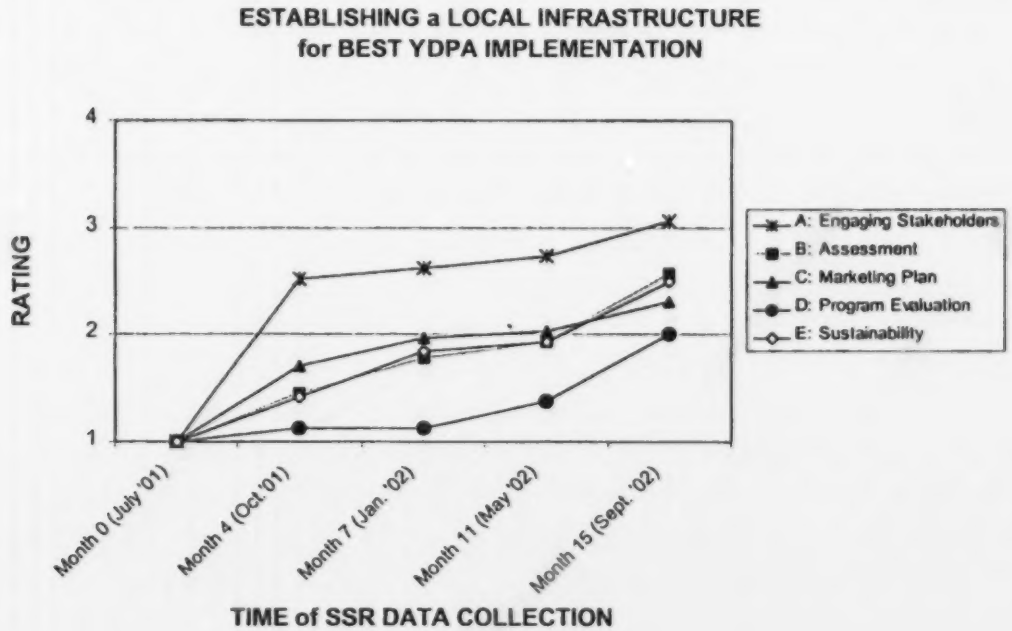
Strand 2. Establishing a Local Infrastructure for BEST YDPA Implementation

In order to establish a local infrastructure for BEST YDPA implementation, BEST sites were encouraged to complete activities in five dimensions, including:

A. Engaging local stakeholders
B. Assessing sector capacity, needs and priorities
C. Developing a marketing plan
D. Developing a program evaluation plan
E. Developing a sustainability plan

The cohort's progress in completing activities in these five areas is depicted below:

Chart 3:



Over the 15-month reporting period, the BEST sites' progress in *Strand 2: Establishing a Local Infrastructure for YDPA Implementation* was marked by varying degrees of capacity entering into the initiative, and periods of growth and of inactivity along the way. For example, BEST sites reported very strong initial capacity to engage local stakeholders in planning, compared to the other categories of activity. Their progress on establishing a local program evaluation component stood apart from their progress on local assessment, communications, and financing activities—until the fifteenth month. In that month, the cohort's status reflects an overall increase in and convergence of capacity across all five dimensions of YDPA program infrastructure. Factors that account for the cohort's patterns of progress on each dimension of activity are described in the subsections that follow.

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A. Engaging Local Stakeholders

The purpose of engaging local stakeholders in apprenticeship program planning and development is to ensure that the individuals and organizations most likely to be affected by the program, or most responsible for its implementation, are participants in the design process. To monitor sites' progress in engaging their local stakeholders, NIWL asked BEST site leaders to report the extent to which they had completed the following activities:

- Assigned responsibilities for managing the initiative to a BEST site staff person
- *Organized a local apprenticeship program planning committee*
- Ensured diverse representation of local stakeholders in planning activities (including 14 categories of representatives, each representing a discrete activity on the SSR)
- Conducted an orientation or introductory meeting about apprenticeship with local stakeholders
- With the planning committee, developed a vision for the apprenticeship program and infrastructure
- With the planning committee, defined the purpose, deliverables, and timetable for the committee's work

After the first three months, BEST site leaders reported substantial progress in garnering local stakeholder involvement in apprenticeship program planning. Indeed, of the five dimensions of activity required to establish an infrastructure for YDPA implementation, this one ranked the highest in terms of the sites' initial and final status. A number of factors account for this progress.

Early on, all sites reported that they had assigned a staff person to carry out apprenticeship planning and serve as the BEST intermediary organization's liaison to local stakeholders. Establishing a point person is critical because it signals to stakeholders the BEST site's commitment to carrying out the work and the availability of BEST site staff to work with leaders in the community.

In addition, after the first three months, all site leaders reported significant gains in engaging stakeholders already in the youth-serving sector (e.g., youth workers, youth program supervisors, youth-serving organization agency directors), as well as faculty from local colleges and, in the case of two BEST sites, representatives from WIA Boards and Youth Councils.

In interviews conducted during the fifth month, all BEST site leaders indicated that they were drawing upon their existing relationships with the local youth-serving organizations to build buy-in for the apprenticeship program, and that they were incorporating conversations about YDPA into their ongoing projects and regular meetings with these organizations in the community.

> *To effectively plan our apprenticeship program locally, we need people with expertise in the content area of youth development... and we need people with expertise in the structure of apprenticeship programs. So, our YDPA planning committee will be a*

merging of existing committees...Two people who will be on the apprenticeship planning committee are also part of the BEST advisory group. They are also both on the Workforce Council for Development, so will play a dual role. We've identified the executive directors of youth organizations who should be involved. Members of the educational community are new additions. Now we need to work with people who oversee funding and resources... -Hampton/Newport News BEST Site Leader

We are committed to collaboration with the local agencies. We need to get the agencies involved in the planning, since they are the ones who will be making the apprenticeship program happen in their organizations. Our planning committee will be a new committee. We currently work with a collaboration of 19 agencies. We have asked for volunteers from these agencies to be on the planning committee. We've approached the director of each site, plus middle management and a few front line youth workers, so that we'll have a mixture of different people. We work with national agencies, large local organizations, and small neighborhood-based organizations. We'll get a few representatives from each type of organization. We hope to have 8-12 people on the committee in total. –Kansas City BEST Site Leader

We're planning to weave the apprenticeship program into our existing projects and [plan our] YDPA program through existing structures, [since there is no] dedicated funding stream for YDPA planning. –New York City BEST Site Leader

Our YDPA planning committee will include people from community-based youth-serving organizations, with whom we already had a relationship, and people from WIA and the Regional Employment Boards, with whom we have had to establish new relationships. So, we are merging some existing committees, but also adding new people. This has been our approach all along – to be collaborative with the leadership from key stakeholders. We have a community capacity building focus, so this planning committee was the logical way for us to go. –Springfield BEST Site Leader

All sites reported progress in engaging additional stakeholders later in the process, including their Federal Apprenticeship Technical Representatives (ATRs) and SAC/BAT representatives. One national activity facilitated these efforts for some sites. During month 10, NTI contacted its Federal OATELS representative to request the names and contact information for the ATRs serving the BEST sites' jurisdictions. The OATELS representative offered to send a "heads-up" e-mail to these ATRs, to let them know that representatives from the BEST sites would likely contact them. Meanwhile, in technical assistance e-mails, NTI provided the respective ATRs' contact information to BEST leaders along with sample talking points that BEST site leaders could use during introductory conversations or meetings with their ATRs. Interviews conducted during month 12 indicate that BEST site leaders made progress in working with Federal apprenticeship technical representatives and state apprenticeship council representatives:

Our executive director talked with the ATR periodically by phone. In the coming weeks, we will meet with our local ATR...

Our ATR gave us local guidelines for apprenticeship programs and went through the document with us. She is serving informally as an advisor to us.

We conducted a stakeholder interview with a regional DOL representative and have contacted our State Apprenticeship Council...

We had initial conversations a few months ago with our State Apprenticeship Council representatives...

BEST site leaders in the cohort took different approaches to engage local funders and policy makers: two sites included these representatives on their planning committees, and two did not. This may be due to the availability and interest of funders to participate in planning activities or a deliberate division-of-labor strategy employed by some BEST site leaders to engage these stakeholders solely on financing and sustainability activities rather than the broader array of program planning activities.

Implications

Engaging Local Stakeholders

- For the purposes of program planning, it is critical to involve representatives from the youth-serving sector including youth workers, youth program supervisors, youth-serving organization directors (employers), representatives from WIA Youth Boards/Youth Councils, and representatives from local higher education institutions or other providers of related instruction.
- The status of local affiliates' relationships with stakeholders going into the initiative is a key predictor of success in engaging stakeholders once local planning begins.
- The Department of Labor and national program sponsors have a role to play in facilitating local program sponsors' initial communications with their ATRs. This may include organizing opportunities for local sponsors and ATRs to meet in person, such as through Grantee meetings, regional conferences, or other convenings; providing ATR contact information and suggested talking points to local affiliates; and in turn alerting ATRs to the possibility that representatives from local affiliates will be contacting them.
- Whether and how local YDPA program developers engage funders and policy makers in YDPA program planning may vary, depending on local circumstances, resources, and traditions in the funding community.

B. Assessing Sector Capacity, Needs, and Priorities

The purpose of encouraging BEST site leaders to conduct assessment activities in the local youth-serving sector is ensure that each apprenticeship program capitalizes on local strengths and addresses local priorities, and is realistically designed for effective implementation, even while meeting Federal requirements. To monitor sites' progress in this area, NIWL asked BEST site leaders to report the extent to which they had completed the following activities:

- Assessed local needs and priorities related to apprenticeship among youth workers, youth-serving organizations, training providers, and training program developers (each group representing a discrete activity on the SSR)
- Collected preliminary information about the youth work labor market
- Reviewed planning and implementation approaches proposed by other BEST sites
- Reviewed planning and implementation approaches proposed by other DOL grantees
- Solicited guidance from local sponsors of existing, high quality apprenticeship programs in other occupations
- Reviewed sample Standards of Apprenticeship for local apprenticeship programs in other occupations
- Reviewed DOL reports about wage and compensation levels for occupations in the locality

As depicted in *Chart 3: Establishing a Local Infrastructure for YDPA Implementation*, the BEST intermediary organizations' progress in assessing the local youth-serving sector was characterized by steady advancement from the inception of the project through the seventh month, then a plateau, then a period of more rapid progress between months 12 and 15.

After the first six months, the cohort reported substantial progress in what might be described as "learning from what others are doing." For example, the majority of BEST sites had reviewed other BEST sites' plans and other DOL grantees' plans for establishing YDPA programs. This progress is due, in part, to NTI's compilation and dissemination in month three of a *Proposal Exchange* technical assistance packet that included copies of the plans and/or proposals developed and made available by BEST site leaders and DOL grantees.

During the same timeframe, BEST site leaders took steps toward assessing the needs and priorities of youth workers and youth-serving organizations. One BEST site leader described local activities:

> *We plan to conduct a market analysis of the community, to find out from youth serving organizations what the value of an apprenticeship program would be to them and how many resources they would have available. The market analysis will include in-person and phone interviews... We will wait until we have the results from this market analysis before we define our target population.*

Months 8 through 11 represented the cohort's plateau in assessing sector capacity and needs. This may be because NTI and BEST site leaders began, in month eight, to focus intently on developing the on-the-job training component of the national BEST YDPA program, as described further in *Strand 3-A*.

In month 11, NTI developed and distributed to BEST site leaders *Establishing BEST YDPAs: A Guide for Collecting Local Input*. Based upon an analysis of DOL's template for National Guideline Standards, and divided into 12 sections pertaining to key program design elements, the *Guide* included questions intended to facilitate BEST site leaders' discussions and assessment activities with local stakeholders (See *Guide for Collecting Local Input on YPDA Program Elements—Key Topics* in Appendix D.) Later that month, NTI scheduled conference calls with each BEST site team to walk through the *Guide*, and subsequently designated the following month as a "local review period" during which BEST site leaders were encouraged to use the *Guide* to support structured conversations and assessment activities with key stakeholders.

In interviews conducted shortly after NTI distributed the *Guide*, various site leaders commented:

> *The BEST YDPA Community Input Process document will drive the meetings with our local stakeholders.*
>
> *This Guide is just what we need...*
>
> *The Community Input and Planning Guide [is] helpful in guiding our progress.*

Following the review period, NTI scheduled and conducted a conference call (month 12) with BEST site leaders to share and discuss local findings from the community input process. NTI asked each BEST site team to address at least three key design topics with their stakeholders; as a result, across all sites in the cohort, 12 design topics were addressed. BEST site leaders used the feedback collected across all sites to inform local design and decision making, while NTI used the collective results as a resource in finalizing the national On-the-Job Training Program and National Guideline Standards for BEST Apprenticeship Programs.

On the final SSR administered in month 15, all sites in the cohort reported completion or near-completion of assessment activities. The activities associated with the local review period contributed to this progress.

Implications

Assessing Sector Capacity, Needs, and Priorities

- Reviewing "what others have done" (e.g., sample Standards of Apprenticeship) or "what others are planning" can provide a foundation for planning and local assessment, particularly in a demonstration initiative in which the program has never been established or implemented before. Over time, more information about YDPA programs will be available through the National YDPA Clearinghouse and from national and local organizations sponsoring YDPA programs. (See *National YDPA Clearinghouse Resources* in Appendix E.)

- National organizations have a role to play in analyzing what will be required of local affiliates and their stakeholders, and then developing common tools that help affiliates assess local capacity and priorities with respect to these requirements.

- In some cases, work can be divided up across a cohort of local affiliates. This division of labor helps to keep each site's own assignments manageable (especially under circumstances in which the affiliates do not have dedicated resources for planning), while capitalizing on the expertise and perspectives that exist across all participating affiliates.

- Local assessment activities are best conducted prior to the sixth month of the initiative, once planning committees are formed. Because NTI was finding its way in a new, complex initiative and needed to conceptualize and develop a new product to facilitate local assessment activities, the BEST YDPA local review period occurred later. Future program developers will likely be able to complete assessment activities within the first six months.

C. Developing a Marketing Plan

The purpose of developing a marketing plan is to ensure that local YDPA sponsors can "get the word out" about the existence of their YDPA program and effectively market the program to prospective employers and apprentices. To monitor sites' progress in this area, NIWL asked BEST site leaders to report the extent to which they had completed the following activities:

- Reviewed existing DOL marketing materials about apprenticeship
- Developed a database of local contacts to receive marketing materials
- Developed processes for updating and managing marketing contacts
- Developed locally-tailored marketing and promotional materials
- Incorporated apprenticeship information into the BEST site's Web sites
- Raised awareness about apprenticeship locally through presentations at local meetings
- Convened key stakeholders for the purpose of outreach and education
- Developed local press contact lists and press kits (each an activity on the SSR)
- Made sample marketing materials available to NTI and the Clearinghouse

Chart 3: Establishing a Local Infrastructure for YDPA Implementation shows the cohort's overall progress in developing marketing and outreach strategies. Their advancement is characterized by strong capacity entering into the initiative and gradual progress for the first six months of the initiative, followed by a tempering of activity and then modest progress thereafter.

After the first six months, site leaders reported progress on several foundational activities, including reviewing existing DOL promotional materials about apprenticeship, sharing general apprenticeship and YDPA information at local meetings with stakeholder groups, and convening key stakeholders for the purpose of outreach and education.

One national activity facilitated this early work. In the second month of the initiative, NTI met with OATELS staff and received copies of the Department's general marketing materials, including brochures, fact sheets, and CDs. Shortly thereafter, NTI sent copies of these materials to BEST site leaders for their information and use locally. Interestingly, in the fifteenth month, the site leaders again reported gains in reviewing national marketing materials for apprenticeship. This is because the National YDPA Clearinghouse had recently completed, and NTI in turn disseminated to BEST site leaders, a set of marketing materials. (See Appendix E: U.S. DOL and National YDPA Clearinghouse Resources.)

As with other major categories of activity, the cohort reported slower progress on marketing work between months 8 and 11. But this belies activities that were nevertheless taking place nationally to position BEST sites to market and promote their BEST Apprenticeship Programs in the future.

In month eight, NTI created a Marketing and Outreach Committee that included representatives from the Kansas City and Springfield BEST sites. (On a parallel track, NTI also created an OJT Program committee that included representatives from the New York City and Hampton/Newport News BEST sites. The work of this committee is described in *Strand 3-A.*) The Marketing and Outreach committee was charged with conceptualizing strategies and products that would facilitate BEST sites' local marketing and promotion of BEST Apprenticeship Programs to two audiences—prospective employers and prospective apprentices.

Committee members began their work by responding, in structured interviews, to key questions about the characteristics of employer and apprentice target audiences, message points, and effective channels of communication. (See *BEST YDPA Program Marketing—Guiding Questions* in Appendix D.)

The Committee then conceptualized marketing materials and strategies that would help BEST site leaders convey essential information to prospective employers and apprentices about the BEST Apprenticeship Program and help prospective employers and apprentices assess their interest and readiness to participate in the BEST YDPA program.

Descriptions of these product ideas, as well as the Committee's suggested message points and communication channels, were included in the *Guide for Collecting Community Input*, (described originally in *Strand 2-B.*) This ensured that, during the local review period, BEST site leaders could collect feedback from prospective apprentices and employers on the marketing and outreach strategies and share this feedback with NTI and other site leaders in the cohort.

Despite the Committee's work, the cohort reported only modest progress on local marketing activities between months 12 and 15. This may be in part due to NTI's decision, in month 12, to prioritize completion of the On-the-Job training program and products, over completion of the marketing resources. NTI made this decision based on a number of factors, including the:

- shear volume of work required to complete the On-the-Job Training program design and products, which NTI believed were more central to the successful piloting of local YDPA programs, yet at the time were being developed simultaneously with marketing materials;
- cohort's substantial progress in engaging local stakeholders and raising awareness about apprenticeship locally, even without the development of BEST-specific marketing materials for the pilot year;
- lack of funding available to NTI or BEST site leaders to develop and produce marketing resources for the pilot year;
- availability of materials—developed by the Department of Labor and the National YDPA Clearinghouse—that the NTI team believed would be useful to BEST site leaders for the pilot, even if not tailored specifically to BEST Apprenticeship Programs.

Although NTI and BEST site leaders did not develop BEST YDPA marketing materials during the planning phase, the Marketing and Outreach Committee's work facilitated progress on other dimensions. For example, the Committee's proposed marketing/communications strategies were used by NTI to develop the Program Overview sections of the national on-the-job training resources. Organized in question-and-answer format, the Program Overviews are intended to answer apprentices' "pressing questions" about the on-the-job training program, as conceptualized by the Committee.

Implications

Developing a Marketing Plan

- Products developed by DOL and the National YDPA Clearinghouse will be helpful to national and local apprenticeship program sponsors who wish to introduce the general idea of apprenticeship and YDPAs to key audiences.
- In the start-up year, the process of engaging stakeholders in planning and design activities may itself suffice for marketing purposes. Indeed, it is more strategic to develop program marketing materials after planning (and even field-testing) is complete, so that there is a proven program to market.
- Carefully considering what information key target audiences need, and how best to organize and deliver that information, will strengthen other aspects of YDPA program planning.
- While developing marketing materials and strategies may be less essential during the planning year, it will likely be more critical in subsequent years of implementation, particularly when programs are ready to build upon the pilot by increasing the number of participating employers, journeyworkers, and apprentices.
- Over time, the most effective strategies for marketing YDPA programs are likely to be locally tailored materials and word-of-mouth testimonials from employers, journeyworkers, and apprentices who have participated in YDPA programs and can attest to a positive experience and good results. This suggests a role for YDPA program sponsors in assessing who, among the program's participants, might be interested in and capable of speaking about their experience at local program orientations, recognition events, conferences, and other meetings.

D. Developing a Program Evaluation Plan

The purpose of establishing a local program evaluation component as part of the infrastructure of a YDPA program is to ensure ongoing assessment and monitoring of apprentices' progress, to ensure continuous improvement of program quality, and to provide for adequate record-keeping and compliance with the Federal regulations governing apprenticeship. To monitor sites' progress in this area, NIWL asked BEST site leaders to report the extent to which they had completed the following activities:

- Developed questions to guide ongoing evaluation of the apprenticeship program in terms of quality and impact
- Developed data collection instruments and processes
- Assigned staff to conduct ongoing assessment and data collection activities
- Developed a plan for incorporating evaluation findings into ongoing planning and program improvement

Although this dimension of activities was far from complete in the fifteenth month, the cohort demonstrated the greatest gains overall in establishing a local evaluation component, as compared to other infrastructure dimensions including local stakeholder involvement, assessment capability, communications, and financing.

After three months, the cohort reported that they had assigned staff to conduct ongoing data collection and evaluation activities, and reported modest advancement in developing data collection instruments and processes to support ongoing evaluation activities.

In month 15, two sites reported additional gains on evaluation activities. One of those sites had selected "Management Information Systems and Record-Keeping" as a program design element to discuss with stakeholders during the local review period.

After month 15, work continued both nationally and locally in this area. For example, with second-round funds from DOL, NTI and NIWL drafted an evaluation plan for BEST site leaders to review at NTI's national BEST YDPA technical assistance convening in month 16. The plan described local data collection, management, and reporting activities that could be implemented in all BEST YDPA programs and generate data about apprentices' progress and YDPA program quality and impact—at the employer level, community level, and national level. Specifically, the plan suggested 13 data collection steps and the administration, collection, and maintenance of forms and records associated with each step. (See *Local Assessment Process and Information Management & Reporting System* in Appendix D.)

Preliminary feedback from BEST site leaders suggested that the draft plan was in the right direction but would require refinement and integration with BEST sites' existing systems for monitoring the quality and impact of training programs. BEST site leaders suggested that some steps could form a core, to be completed by all BEST YDPA programs, while other steps might be optional. Site leaders stressed the importance of streamlining data collection, management, and reporting processes, i.e., keeping data collection and reporting simple during the initial pilot.

The message: start simple at first and build toward a complete model of assessment and evaluation over time. They also expressed interest in maintaining local flexibility to collect data in ways that fit with their existing data collection systems, and recommended that NTI and NIWL examine existing tools and approaches available from DOL or other Federal initiatives.

In its fifth quarterly report to the Department of Labor, NTI summarized its interest in working with DOL representatives to develop a common local program evaluation component for all BEST YDPA programs that, ideally, would link with the existing data collection and analysis capabilities at the Department of Labor, such as the Registered Apprenticeship Information Management System and/or the Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

> *NTI would like to consider... aligning the BEST Apprenticeship Program's proposed data collection/information management system with [existing Federal and State systems.]...Establishing a link between BEST Apprenticeship Programs, other YDPA programs, and DOL's research infrastructure could help promote the permanence of YDPAs and strengthen the U.S. Department of Labor's capability to track, analyze, and report on the labor force of Americans working with youth.*

NTI's work with BEST site leaders and DOL representatives on this component is expected to continue through 2003.

Implications

Developing a Program Evaluation Plan

- National program sponsors working with more than one affiliate may want to develop an approach to local data collection, monitoring, and reporting that can be implemented by all local affiliates.
- DOL's Offices of Youth Services and Apprenticeship Training (OYS and OATELS) and other national YDPA funders may want to encourage all YDPA program sponsors to collect, key data that supports the Department's efforts to track, analyze, and report information about apprentices and YDPA programs.
- As with program marketing activities, the development of a local evaluation component may not need to begin until later in the planning period, once the training components and Standards of Apprenticeship are more clearly defined.

E. Developing a Sustainability Plan

The purpose of developing a sustainability plan is to ensure that local YDPA sponsors are prepared to raise, deploy, and maximize new and existing funding, in-kind contributions, and strategic partnerships to support ongoing YDPA implementation. To monitor the cohort's progress in this area, NIWL asked BEST site leaders to report the extent to which they had completed the following activities:

- Secured approval from the BEST intermediary organization's board of directors to incorporate apprenticeship into the organization's business and financing plans
- Established a committee of community advisors to provide ongoing guidance to implementation and sustainability
- Ensured that the committee included appropriate representation from key stakeholders
- Developed an annual apprenticeship program budget
- Developed a set of financing strategies for the apprenticeship program, including establishing fee structure, attracting public- and private-sector funds, minimizing costs when possible, and attracting in-kind contributions (each representing a discrete activity on the SSR)
- Secured commitments from stakeholders to support ongoing implementation
- Researched prospective sources of scholarship funds
- Ensured that financing strategies reflected support for incentives, wage increases, and recognition for youth workers moving up a career ladder
- Developed a coherent, written plan for fundraising and sustainability in the form of a funding proposal

The cohort's overall progress on this dimension mirrored its progress on the local research dimension. That is, the cohort demonstrated early progress, then a "quiet" period, followed by greater progress leading up to the fifteenth month.

After three months, the majority of sites had secured approval from their organizations' boards of directors to incorporate apprenticeship into the organization's core fundraising and business plans. During an interview, one site leader explained:

> *Funders understand that part of our core funding will be used for YDPA development. This allows us also to try to get funds specifically for YDPA. Our executive director has shared a vision for workforce development with the staff and board and it was incorporated into the mission and value system of our organization.*

In addition, one BEST site reported that it had earmarked scholarship funds to help apprentices defray their costs of completing related instruction requirements at the local community college. A few months later, two more sites reported that they had also made modest progress in this area.

After six months, two sites reported that they had formed a community advisory committee to provide ongoing guidance on sustainability. These are the same two sites that reported, under "engaging local stakeholders" (described in *Strand 2-A*), that their apprenticeship program planning committees included public- and private-sector funders, as well as policy makers or opinion leaders. For these sites, the planning committee served a dual purpose—developing the program *and* planning for sustainability.

In month 11, one site reported that it completed the development of a proposal to support implementation, while two sites reported modest progress in the area of proposal development. In the fifteenth month, all four sites reported gains in securing resources, either through commitments from stakeholders, through the identification of scholarship funds, or the development of strategies for attracting private-sector funds. The majority of sites also reported that they had begun to develop an annual apprenticeship program budget and that they were beginning to develop funding strategies that reflected support for incentives, wage increases and recognition for apprentices moving up a career ladder.

In addition to the sites' concerted efforts to identify funding and in-kind resources to support implementation, one activity at the national level probably contributed to the cohort's reported progress leading up to month 15. In month 14, NTI developed a sample budget template for BEST YDPA implementation and disseminated this template to BEST site leaders for their review and use in funding proposals. Recognizing that actual costs and expenses would vary from site to site, the template included categories and line items that would likely be associated with ongoing implementation of BEST YDPA programs. (See *Sample Budget Template for YDPA Implementation* in Appendix D.)

As with the development of a local program evaluation component, national and local work on sustainability continued after the fifteenth month. For example, NTI invited representatives from The Finance Project, a highly regarded Washington DC-based policy research and technical assistance organization, to present its framework for sustainability planning and financing to BEST site leaders at NTI's national technical assistance convening in month 16.

Overall, across all reporting periods, the cohort reported the least advancement on two activities: determining an apprenticeship program fee structure that would generate revenue to cover program costs, and in developing strategies for attracting Federal, state, and/or local public-sector funds. This indicates BEST site leaders' preference to absorb the costs of the YDPA program, rather than pass them on to apprentices through a revenue generation strategy. Traditionally, BEST sites offer the 28-hour *Advancing Youth Development* course for free or charge only modest fees (e.g., $25 per participant) representing a large subsidization of participants' costs and major support to the youth-serving sector. In addition, the financial climate at local and state levels shifted tremendously during 2001-2002. BEST sites commented to NTI on the fallout from slashed state and local budgets. In the face of major cuts, BEST site leaders were less optimistic or less successful in accessing state or local funds.

To promote more widespread seeding of YDPA programs across the country, and to capitalize on the capacity and extensive affiliate networks of major national organizations, Department of

Labor officials initiated a second round of funding (in month 13) for national organizations with local affiliates. Organizations including the **National 4-H Council, Opportunities Industrialization Center of America, SER Jobs for Progress National, Inc., and YMCA of the USA** joined with DOL's first-round grantees—including **Goodwill Industries International Inc., YouthBuild USA and NTI**—to develop and pilot YDPA programs. NTI and other first-round grantees received second-round funding, and will continue to pursue continuation funding—as well as other financing options—to support national and local implementation and replication of YDPA programs.

Implications

Developing a Sustainability Plan

- Incorporating YDPAs into the core missions and business plans of sponsoring organizations and employers may facilitate ongoing fundraising and sustainability.
- Funders, higher education institutions, employers, and YDPA program sponsors have a role to play in helping apprentices defray the costs of related instruction. Scholarships represent one strategy for financing this component.
- Employers piloting the YDPA program within their agencies will likely experience a financial impact associated with apprentice wage progression and the additional investment of time required by journeyworkers to train apprentices on the job. Local funders and program sponsors (if different than the employers) will want to consider providing financial or other incentives to employers to facilitate and recognize this commitment.
- In an intermediary-based YDPA model like the BEST Apprenticeship Program, the budget for ongoing program implementation will likely include expenses such as: program management and oversight; program marketing and evaluation; stipends and technical assistance to participating journeyworkers and employers; scholarships or subsidies for apprentices; annual orientation and recognition activities; other direct program costs; and associated indirect costs.
- Local funders and policy makers have a role to play in recognizing, through the targeting of their grants and contracts, the commitment of YDPA program sponsors and employers to program quality.
- Financing frameworks and strategies developed by national policy and research organizations (such as The Finance Project and others) will prove useful in creating innovative financing approaches for YDPA programs.

Strand 3. Developing Standards of Apprenticeship

In order to develop local Standards of Apprenticeship, BEST sites were encouraged to complete activities in two categories, including:

A. Developing On-the-Job Training and Related Instruction Components
B. Developing Administrative Policies and Procedures

The cohort's progress along these two dimensions is depicted below:

Chart 4:

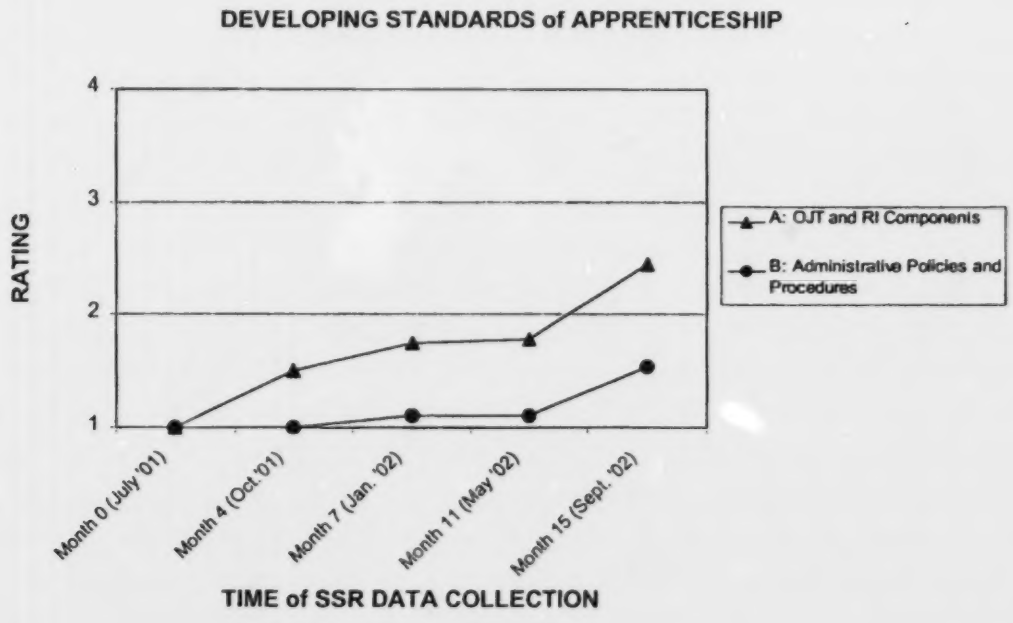

Chart 4: Developing Standards of Apprenticeship indicates that BEST site leaders started and ended the planning phase with greater capacity to implement the on-the-job training and related instruction components of their apprenticeship programs than to register their programs using local Standards of Apprenticeship. The cohort demonstrated a burst of activity in both areas between months 12 and 15, although the pace of progress in establishing the training components exceeded that of local program registration.

The differences in capacity and progress between these areas of work reflect, on the one hand, the BEST sites' expertise in delivering or sponsoring high quality training for youth workers—such as *Advancing Youth Development* courses and college-based youth work certificates—while on the other hand, the challenge that NTI and BEST sites initially experienced in learning the "new DOL language" required to develop Standards of Apprenticeship. In addition, the amount of time required nationally, by NTI and OATELS, to finalize NTI's National Guideline

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Standards—which are the template that BEST sites must use to develop local Standards of Apprenticeship—accounts for the sites' reporting of lower scores on this dimension in month 15.

A. Developing On-the-Job Training and Related Instruction Components

The purpose of developing on-the-job training and related instruction (RI) components is to ensure that apprentices develop a foundational level of proficiency in specific youth work competencies through rigorous, structured activities that are consistent with quality training standards and Federal apprenticeship regulations. To monitor sites' progress in this area, NIWL asked BEST site leaders to report the extent to which they had completed the following activities:

- Developed a list of foundational competencies for the BEST youth development practitioner apprentice
- Used *Advancing Youth Development* as a resource in developing the core competencies list
- Developed a locally-tailored outline of on-the-job work processes and allocation of time to each process, based on core competencies
- Developed a locally-tailored outline of related instruction in technical subjects related to core competencies
- Defined experience, training, or skills that qualify applicants for advanced standing and commensurate wage progression in the apprenticeship program
- Developed locally-tailored tools for documenting credit to be given for prior experience
- Established training program policies, including: the term of apprenticeship, the term of probationary period, the numeric ratio of apprentices to journeyworkers, minimum qualifications for persons entering apprenticeship program, minimum qualifications for persons providing on-the-job training, minimum qualifications for persons providing related instruction, minimum safety standards for equipment and training facilities (each representing a discrete activity on the SSR)
- Solicited feedback from the local ATR on proposed training/instructional components and requirements

Overall, in establishing the On-the-Job Training and Related Instruction components, the cohort demonstrated relatively strong capacity at beginning of the initiative combined with a spurt of progress toward the end of the planning phase.

After the first three months, all sites in the cohort reported near-completion of an essential activity: defining competencies that apprentices should develop during the apprenticeship program. Several local factors likely facilitated this early accomplishment. For example, one session of the 28-hour, seven session *Advancing Youth Development* course delivered to youth workers by the cohort's BEST trainers, introduces a framework called the Core Competencies of Youth Work. The framework emphasizes the preparedness of youth workers in three broad areas: youth workers as professional and caring workers; youth workers as resources to youth; and youth workers as resources to organizations.

Figure 5: Categories of Youth Work Competencies

Youth Workers as Professional and Caring Workers: This includes demonstrating professional attitudes and caring and respectful behaviors toward young people, their families, and communities.

Youth Workers as Resources to Youth: This includes applying adolescent development theory to specific youth in the program, and applying techniques that help specific young people build and sustain respectful relationships with each other and adults, and develop their leadership and participation skills.

Youth Workers as Resources to Organizations: This includes demonstrating the capacity to work with youth to plan, implement, and assess the results of youth program activities, and to work with colleagues and other community members to access supports and services for the benefit of young people's development.

Adapted from AED Center for Youth Development and Policy Research

BEST site leaders brought existing capacity to the YDPA initiative and were well positioned to make early progress because they had been introducing this framework to youth workers through *Advancing Youth Development* courses since 1997.

National activities also contributed to local progress. For example, at the start of the initiative, the Department of Labor issued a list of recommended work processes for the on-the-job training component of the YDPA program. DOL developed its list in 2000, after meeting with a wide range of stakeholders including representatives from NTI, to gather input on youth work competencies and practices. During the third month of the YDPA initiative, NTI analyzed DOL's recommended work processes, the Core Competencies for Youth Work from the *Advancing Youth Development* framework (see Figure 5), and the Department of Labor's SCANS Competencies, which emphasize workforce preparedness in the areas of resources, information, interpersonal skills, systems, and technology. NTI's analysis resulted in an integrated competencies framework that addressed the foundations of youth work practice and workplace skills and provided an underpinning for BEST YDPA on-the-job training.

NTI distributed the integrated competencies framework to BEST site leaders during the third month of the initiative, reviewed and discussed the framework with BEST site leaders on a cross-site conference call later that month, then finalized it for use during a BEST YDPA technical assistance convening in month five. At that meeting, NTI and BEST site leaders began to work competency-by-competency, answering:

> *What can apprentices say, do or express (through non-verbal cues) to demonstrate progress in developing this competency?*
>
> *What can apprentices write or develop to demonstrate progress in developing this competency?*

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What evidence can young people, journeyworkers, or employers provide to attest to the apprentice's development of this competency?

NTI later used the outcomes of this discussion as a springboard for developing and refining a list of competency indicators, i.e., indicators that journeyworkers could use to assess apprentices' development of specific competencies during each segment of the on-the-job training program. In its second quarterly report to DOL, NTI reflected on the significance and challenge of the work begun at the BEST YDPA meeting:

NTI and BEST site leaders are in the process of designing a BEST YDPA on-the-job training program that will result in apprentices' development of specific competencies for their profession. Many of these competencies—such as "demonstrate concern about the well-being of others," and "demonstrate support of the self-esteem of others"—require the development of apprentices' own "soft" skills and their ability to promote the development of "soft" skills in the youth they work with. Defining indicators and developing instruments that enable journeyworkers to accurately monitor the development of these competencies on the job will be challenging but doable. NTI and BEST site leaders began this process at a brainstorming session in the BEST YDPA meeting and we affirmed that among NTI and cohort members, we do possess the vocabulary to define observable and measurable indicators.

After three months, the majority of sites reported progress in developing the content of their related instruction components. This is likely because BEST site leaders began working with their college partners to align DOL's list of technical subject requirements with the courses and subjects offered by the colleges. For example, in an interview conducted during month five, a Kansas City site leader explained:

Our BEST site has had a certificate program at the community college since 1997. We'll just have to match the current program up with the DOL requirements. We think it's about an 85 percent match right now. -Kansas City BEST Site Leader

We formed a Related Instruction Subcommittee—made up of our staff, a community college representative, a workforce development person, and one other. The majority [of the related instruction requirements were] already in place at the community college. We created two of the courses—Advancing Youth Development and Creativity & Youth Engagement. Our [BEST intermediary] staff teach those courses as adjunct professors. -Hampton/Newport News BEST Site Leader

During the first six months, through conversations with BEST site leaders, NTI confirmed that the specific courses and class schedules offered by each BEST site's college partner varied widely, and that the alignment of each college's courses with DOL requirements would necessarily look different in each city. As a result, NTI concluded that the responsibility for developing the related instruction component was better held locally, by BEST sites and their college partners, than nationally by NTI. Indeed, BEST site leaders needed only the list of DOL

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requirements to begin the process of aligning and negotiating with their college partners. In a *Lessons Learned* document prepared by NTI for the National YDPA Clearinghouse, NTI reflected on this lesson learned:

> *The delivery of related instruction varies widely across communities, depending upon the types and availability of related instruction providers. Because of this, NTI has played a far more modest role in the conceptualization and design of the related instruction component of BEST Apprenticeship Programs. Prior to the launch of YDPAs by the Department of Labor, BEST site leaders had good working relationships with their local higher education institutions and had contributed to the institutions' creation of youth development certificate programs. In fact, many BEST site leaders serve as adjunct faculty and instructors of courses that focus on youth development. These relationships paved the way for BEST site leaders to negotiate with higher education institution representatives about the design of their RI components, as well as the articulation of the apprentice's RI toward a certificate or degree. The national role in developing this component has been minimal.*

The division of labor between the national and local partners is significant because it enabled BEST site leaders to work independently on the related instruction component while NTI organized a parallel process for developing a common on-the-job training program for all BEST YDPA programs.

NTI's strategy involved forming and convening an OJT Program Committee with representatives from the Hampton/Newport News and New York BEST sites, during month eight. Like the Marketing and Outreach Committee formed during the same time period and described earlier in *Strand 2-C*, the OJT Program Committee was charged with conceptualizing an On-the-Job Training Program and contributing to the development of training products that could be piloted by all local BEST Apprenticeship Programs. In a one-and-a-half-day meeting, the committee grappled with a range of program and product design questions. (See *BEST YDPA On-the-Job Training Program Design—Guiding Questions* in Appendix D.)

The meeting yielded good results that advanced the development of the BEST YDPA on-the-job training program design. Importantly, among many meeting outcomes, the committee reached consensus on the categories of activities that BEST apprentices would likely undertake on the job to develop specific competencies, including:

- activities working directly with youth;
- self-evaluation and reflection activities;
- self-directed learning activities;
- program and organizational support activities; and
- external community relations.

Similarly, the committee reached consensus on the categories of activities that journeyworkers would undertake in their roles as supervisors and coaches of apprentices. The categories of journeyworker activities included:

- Preparatory and planning work
- Interacting with the apprentice, including teaching, coaching, and providing feedback
- Ongoing documentation, monitoring and analysis
- Working with the employer to integrate OJT into organizational culture

The Hampton/Newport News and New York City BEST sites used these meeting results to outline training resources that they believed would effectively support on-the-job training in all BEST YDPA programs. Meanwhile, NTI developed and refined its list of indicators to use as the "backbone" of the on-the-job training program's assessment system.

Between months 12 and 15, NTI drafted, with substantial contributions from the New York and Hampton/Newport News Committee members, an *On-the-Job Training Guide for BEST Journeyworkers* and *On-the-Job Training Guide for BEST Apprentices*.

Figure 6: Contents of On-the-Job Training Guide for BEST Journeyworkers

- Program Overview: Organized in question-and-answer format, the Program Overview provides information about the purpose, format, and requirements of apprentices and journeyworkers of the BEST OJT Program.
- Journeyworker Tasks: Includes tips for recognizing learning styles, making training plans, motivating apprentices, explaining and demonstrating best practices, coaching apprentices, observing apprentices as they apply knowledge and techniques to their work with young people, assessing apprentices' proficiency and progress, and keeping notes and records
- Sample Training Plans: For every two-week period of the OJT program, a sample plan with suggestions for training activities, motivational points, coaching points, and record-keeping reminders.
- Assessment Instruments: For each segment of the OJT program, a detailed assessment instrument that the journeyworker completes to evaluate and document the apprentices' development of competencies.

Plus, all contents of the OJT Guide for BEST Apprentices

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Figure 7: Contents of On-the-Job Training Guide for BEST Apprentices

- Program Overview: Provides information about the purpose, format, and requirements of the BEST OJT Program.
- Training Objectives: A list of specific training objectives (or competencies) that apprentices are expected to develop and demonstrate during each segment of the OJT program.
- Self-Assessment Instruments: A checklist that apprentices can use to document their level of proficiency in competency areas at the beginning of each program segment.
- Concepts and Theories: Concepts, theories, and principles related to youth development and youth work practice, including the physiological, biological, social, and other changes taking place in adolescents; the positive developmental outcome areas for youth; the opportunities, services and supports that promote young people's development; and many others.
- Tips and Techniques: Guidelines for applying techniques—such as listening actively, demonstrating empathy, and setting boundaries—while working with youth.
- Exercises and Activities: Opportunities to reinforce the application of knowledge and techniques while working with youth
- Workplace Skills: A section of tips, tools and other resources to support effective workplace practices, including making task lists, setting and keeping priorities, preparing for and participating in supervisory or organization staff meetings, using workplace technology, understanding employment policies and procedures, and many others.

From early conceptualization through the stages of writing, revision and production, the process of developing the on-the-job program component and resources took seven months, ending in month 15. In that month, as a result of the Committee's work and all four sites' review and critique of OJT products, each site in the cohort reported progress on specific activities related to the On-the-Job Training design.

During interviews, NIWL asked for site leaders' reflections on the pros and cons of developing products through committees. Their comments indicate that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages:

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The committees allowed us to get involved in the process... and [also] our local colleagues... Thus, the products had more local nuances and became more relevant and practical...However, it takes longer... since more players are involved beyond NTI.
-Kansas City BEST Site Leader

Through committees, the strengths of the cohort combine to make the best possible product. The discussions are informative, invaluable... However, the [geographic] distance among NTI and BEST site leaders makes it more difficult [to do work by committee]... -Hampton/Newport News Site Leader

BEST Apprenticeship is a national initiative but it needs to be sold at a local level. The committee process allows local organizations to give their input.
-Springfield BEST Site Leader

Through the committee process, local organizations have some input on what this initiative will look like. However, it may take a little longer to get things done.
-New York City BEST Site Leader

Implications

Developing On-the-Job Training and Related Instruction Components

- An important first step in developing an On-the-Job Training program is reaching clarity about who the target audience is. NTI and BEST site leaders decided that BEST YDPA programs would, in general, target entry-level workers or those with one or two years' work experience. Other program developers may decide differently. Making this decision enables YDPA program developers to better characterize and anticipate the existing skill base of workers entering their program, and then set parameters for program content and outcomes.

- Answering the question, "How will journeyworkers know when apprentices are proficient in specific competencies?" is another essential step in OJT program development. The Department of Labor's list of recommended work processes, and competency frameworks developed by other organizations for the youth work profession, are helpful resources. Specification of competency indicators, and the development of assessment instruments using these indicators, will contribute to the rigor of YDPA on-the-job training programs.

- Apprenticeship is not just about apprentices; it's about journeyworkers as well. YDPA program developers will want to carefully consider and plan for the roles and responsibilities of journeyworkers who deliver training to apprentices on the job. Journeyworkers need training to understand and prepare for their roles, resources that help them fulfill their responsibilities and complete key tasks, and ongoing support as they promote the development of an apprentice.

- National YDPA program developers and funders will want to weigh and plan for the tradeoffs involved in engaging local affiliates in the design of the On-the-Job Training program and products. An OJT program, and associated resources, that are developed in partnership with affiliates will likely be more responsive to local perspectives, more comprehensive, and more realistic to implement. However, factors such as geographic distance and the extra time needed to coordinate the participation and contribution of committee members will lengthen the development process. Program developers, stakeholders, and funders who invest in a collaborative approach will likely experience longer timelines but will in turn benefit from the "value-added" of this approach.

- Particularly when relationships already exist between local YDPA program developers and college leaders, local affiliates (rather than national organizations) will take primary responsibility for aligning YDPA requirements with college course offerings.

B. Developing Administrative Policies and Procedures

The purpose of developing administrative policies and procedures is to ensure the program sponsor's clarity and compliance in carrying out the roles, responsibilities, and tasks of YDPA implementation; to put in place policies and procedures that protect apprentices; and to prepare the YDPA program for registration by the local State Apprenticeship Council (SAC) or Bureau of Apprenticeship Training (BAT). To monitor sites' progress in this area, NIWL asked BEST site leaders to report the extent to which they had completed the following activities:

- Established program registration policies and procedures
- Established program grievance policies and procedures
- Established provisions for cancellation and de-registration of the program
- Developed written Standards of Apprenticeship
- Developed a written Apprenticeship Agreement
- Solicited feedback from local ATR on proposed policies, processes, and agreements
- Voluntarily registered the apprenticeship program with the BAT or SAC.

In hindsight, this list of activities is not fully representative of the activities or topics that YDPA program developers, including BEST site leaders, need to address to develop local Standards of Apprenticeship and register their programs. In developing the "administrative policies and procedures" section of the SSR (as with all other sections) during month two, NTI and NIWL made a "best guess" about the activities that would advance BEST sites' progress toward program registration—but in this section missed the mark. The complete list of topics that need to be addressed in local Standards of Apprenticeship is shown in *Figure 8: Topics Addressed in Local Standards of Apprenticeship*. BEST site leaders reported their progress on provisions related to the on-the-job training, related instruction, and wage progression components in other sections of the SSR (described in *Strands 3 and 4*). But due to the design of the SSR, they were unable to report progress in addressing other provisions, such as sponsor and employer responsibilities and management information systems.

With few exceptions, the site leaders reported little progress on the "administrative policies and procedures" dimension until month 15. In that month, the cohort reported the greatest amount of progress on the activity called "developing local Standards of Apprenticeship." This is important because all other activities upon which site leaders were asked to report in this section, and many others upon which they were not, can be subsumed under this single and substantial activity.

There may be several explanations for the flat trend line observed until month 12. First, the provisions embodied in the Standards of Apprenticeship represented a "new language" for NTI and BEST site leaders to learn. In month three, NTI received help from OATELS staff in interpreting the Federal regulations and requirements that all apprenticeship programs—regardless of industry or occupation—must comply with and address through their Standards of Apprenticeship. Shortly thereafter, NTI conducted a cross-site call with BEST site leaders to

review each provision and discuss how to operationalize it in an intermediary-based BEST system. Learning the language of apprenticeship posed a significant challenge to BEST site leaders and NTI, as documented in interviews:

> *There are tons of details. Learning and feeling comfortable with the language, acronyms, processes, and culture of apprenticeship is challenging.*
>
> *The standards are complicated because they're very technical... Translating them and connecting them to our own perceived path is challenging.*
>
> *We're finding that the DOL language and the language of apprenticeship are hard to merge [with our existing language]...*
>
> *One breakthrough for me was to become comfortable with the DOL language and to understand it.*

In its first quarterly report to the Department of Labor, NTI made a similar observation and also identified DOL resources that were helpful in introducing the language and requirements of apprenticeship.

> *NTI encountered (and continues to encounter) a steep learning curve on apprenticeship program design and processes. The following information/resources from OATELS have been particularly useful in addressing this challenge: an introductory face-to-face meeting with OATELS staff covering key topics on apprenticeship planning, design, content; a conference call with OATELS staff to discuss the provisions as codified in statute; and the written step-by-step apprenticeship planning guide available from OATELS.*

Another explanation for the cohort's tempered progress in the first three reporting periods is that the local Standards of Apprenticeship are a cumulative deliverable in the initiative. That is, until all major decisions are made about program design, policies, and procedures, the Standards of Apprenticeship cannot be drafted and programs cannot be registered.

In month 11, NTI distributed to BEST site leaders the *Guide for Collecting Community Input*, which was adapted from DOL's templates of National Guideline Standards and local Standards of Apprenticeship (and originally described in *Strand 2-B*). In reviewing this document with local stakeholders, and in deliberating about key program design and administration provisions, BEST site leaders were in effect institutionalizing their knowledge of Standards of Apprenticeship, contributing to the development of the National Guideline Standards, and readying themselves for local program registration.

The primary factor prohibiting the cohort from reporting greater progress in month 15 was the national timeline, not the local timeline. In the foreword of the *Guide*, NTI explained its understanding of the process:

As the national sponsor, NTI is required to submit National Guideline Standards for BEST Apprenticeship Programs to the U.S. Department of Labor for certification. Once certified by DOL, copies of the National Guideline Standards will be transmitted by the Federal OATELS office to local field offices throughout the country.

As local sponsors of BEST YDPA programs, BEST site leaders will work from the National Guidelines to develop local Standards of Apprenticeship for each BEST Apprenticeship Program. Local [standards might include] additional provisions that enable the YDPA program to meet state-specific requirements... BEST site leaders will submit their local Standards of Apprenticeship to their State Apprenticeship Council (SAC) or Bureau of Apprenticeship & Training (BAT) offices for approval. Once approved by the SAC or BAT, the local BEST YDPA program is officially registered with the U.S. Department of Labor and BEST sites will be able to enroll apprentices in the local program.

Using information collected by BEST site leaders from their stakeholders in month 12, NTI developed its first draft of the National Guideline Standards for BEST Apprenticeship Programs and distributed it to BEST site leaders and OATELS staff for review, in a parallel process, during month 15. As with all other apprenticeship programs in all occupations, the National Guideline Standards for BEST YDPAs addressed all required provisions, but tailored each one to fit with the capacity, design, and priorities of the youth development practitioner occupation, National BEST Network, and local BEST systems.

Figure 8:
Topics Addressed in Local Standards of Apprenticeship

1. Program Administration
2. Equal Opportunity Pledge
3. Affirmative Action Plan
4. Qualifications for Apprenticeship
5. Apprenticeship Agreement
6. Ratio of Apprentices to Journeyworkers
7. Term of Apprenticeship
8. Probationary Period
9. Hours of Work
10. Apprentice Wage Progression
11. Credit for Previous Experience
12. Work Experience
13. Related Instruction
14. Safety and Health Training
15. Supervision of Apprentices
16. Records and Examinations
17. Maintenance of Records
18. Certificate of Completion of Apprenticeship
19. Notice of Registration
20. Cancellation and Deregistration
21. Amendments and Modifications
22. Adjusting Differences/Complaint Procedure
23. Transfer of Training Obligations
24. Technical Assistance Providers
25. Employer Acceptance Agreement
26. Conformance with State and Federal Regulations
27. Signature Page Adopting Apprenticeship Standards

Between months 15 and 18, NTI and OATELS staff completed a half-dozen rounds of technical revisions to ensure that the National Guidelines incorporated BEST sites' feedback and met Federal requirements. NTI submitted its final draft of the National Guideline Standards to OATELS in December 2002, month 18. From that point, OATELS staff moved the Guidelines through four approval steps within the Department of Labor. NTI's National Guideline Standards for BEST Apprenticeship Programs were certified in February 2003, month 20, and at that point BEST site leaders began the process of registering their programs locally.

Although NTI and BEST site leaders were laying the groundwork to draft Standards—by learning the Federal regulations in month three, developing the OJT and related instruction components from months 3 through 14, and conducting local assessment activities in months 12 and 13—NTI did not actually draft and distribute the National Guidelines until month 15—the same month BEST site leaders' reported the most progress.

No doubt, BEST site leaders would have progressed more swiftly and completed local program registration sooner had they been able to directly register their programs with the SAC/BAT rather than participate in a national program cohort and wait for the certification of National Guideline Standards. However, the process for local program registration is expected to run more smoothly and take less time because BEST site leaders are working with a template that

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has already been federally certified. In addition, the existence of the template developed by OATELS and NTI, with input from BEST sites, translates into less work for local BEST sites: rather than drafting a lengthy and technical document from scratch, they need only make small additions or revisions to national template. Finally, registering a local program using certified National Guideline Standards implies that the local sponsor is part of something larger—a national program involving many program sponsors, located in many cities, all moving forward with a common vision and expectations for implementation and results.

Implications

Developing Administrative Policies and Procedures

- The Department of Labor and the National YDPA Clearinghouse have tools and materials that will help YDPA program developers (who are new to apprenticeship) learn more about how to develop National Guideline Standards and Local Standards of Apprenticeship.
- In developing National Guideline Standards that will serve as a template for local YDPA sponsors, national organizations are accountable to two audiences: the Department of Labor because it establishes and monitors compliance with program regulations, and local affiliates because their labor market's needs must drive the design and because they are ultimately responsible for program implementation. The national program developer's primary role is to ensure that the National Guideline Standards effectively meet the needs and expectations of both audiences, while maintaining integrity with the national sponsor's principles.
- Local program developers who are affiliated with national program sponsors may face delays in registering their programs, depending upon the amount of time it takes to develop and certify the National Guideline Standards. All YDPA program developers and funders will want to take this into account when developing work plans, and coordinate early with OATELS representatives to discuss and coordinate a national timeline in the start-up year.

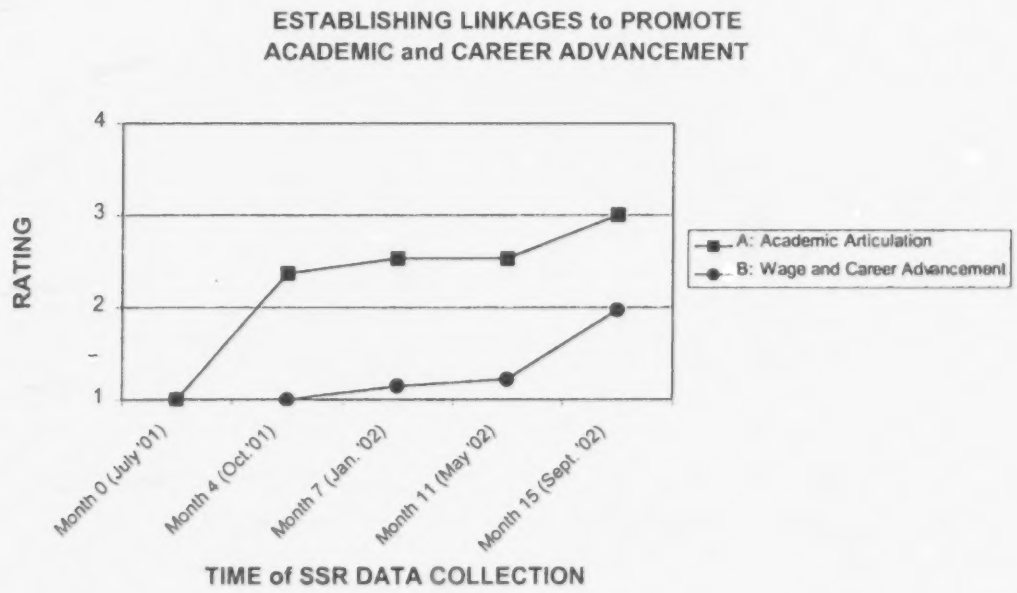
Strand 4. Establishing Linkages to Promote Academic and Career Advancement

The last of the four major strands of program planning concerned establishing linkages to promote apprentices' academic and career advancement. BEST sites were encouraged to complete activities in two categories, including:

A. Developing academic articulation agreements
B. Supporting wage progression and career advancement

The cohort's overall progress along these two dimensions is depicted below:

Chart 5:



The chart above shows the disparity between the sites' capacity on the two dimensions of activity for *Establishing Linkages to Promote Academic and Career Advancement*. On the one hand, the cohort entered the initiative ready to work with colleges to make sure that apprentices received college credit for their related instruction—a relatively easy task in light of their existing partnerships with colleges. Site leaders were less sure, however, about how to help employers attach a progressive wage scale to apprentices' growth and performance over two years—a seemingly more complex task and something the site leaders and participating employers had never attempted before. In the fifteenth month, the cohort closed the gap somewhat between these two dimensions.

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A. Developing Academic Articulation Agreements

The purpose of creating academic articulation agreements is to ensure that apprentices receive college credit for the time they spend and the results they achieve in completing YDPA related instruction requirements, and that this credit can be applied toward the college's certificate or degree program in youth work. To monitor sites' progress in this area, NIWL asked BEST site leaders to report the extent to which they had completed the following activities:

- Identified local higher education institutions with youth work certificate programs, two-year degree programs, and/or four-year degree programs
- Conducted outreach to administrators and faculty of higher education institutions offering youth work certificate and degree programs
- Organized a Working Group with representatives from YDP apprenticeship programs and college-based certificate/degree programs to develop articulation plan
- Identified ways in which the YDPA program's OJT and related instruction requirements meet the requirements of college-based certificate and degree programs
- Developed administrative processes to support transferability of apprenticeship "credits" to and among participating higher education institutions
- Developed administrative processes to support dual accreditation, enabling apprentices to apply their apprenticeship credits toward an Associates Degree
- Identified an array of student supports that will help ensure apprentices' successful matriculation from apprenticeship programs to college-based programs
- Developed articulation agreements with higher education institutions

In month three, the cohort reported identifying local higher education institutions and conducting outreach to the administration and faculty of these institutions. Three months later, the cohort reported progress in establishing a committee to develop an articulation plan. In interviews, one BEST site leader describe the local strategy:

> *We were going to separate Related Instruction from the community college's Career Studies certificate program. But after discussing it further, we decided to integrate the two since it only made sense to have the apprentices who go through the Related Instruction have the opportunity to earn the certificate as well. The certificate requires 29 credit hours. We added a couple of courses to the pre-existing program. If they want to pursue their associate's degree, most of the credits can count toward it. This still needs to be approved by the board but we are expecting [approval]...*

By month 15, the cohort reported significant progress on formalizing articulation agreements, including developing administrative processes and articulation agreements themselves.

Implications

Developing Academic Articulation Agreements

- YDPA program sponsors have a unique opportunity to become familiar with the variety of academic resources and supports available to local youth workers, e.g. by conducting a scan of local higher education institutions' academic programs and policies for granting credit.
- For YDPA programs (like BEST YDPAs) that use colleges as the primary vehicle for delivering related instruction, articulation agreements will be relatively straightforward to implement as long as apprentices enroll as students in the college.
- YDPA programs sponsors who select a variety of training organizations/institutions to serve as related instruction providers may face substantial work and negotiation with colleges to enable apprentices to get credits for their training at non-college institutions.

B. Wage Progression, Recognition, and Career Advancement

The purpose of establishing wage progression, recognition, and career advancement opportunities is to ensure that youth workers are appropriately compensated and recognized for their contributions and performance on the job, and have opportunities to advance their careers. To monitor sites' progress in this area, NIWL asked BEST site leaders to report the extent to which they had completed the following activities:

- Developed guidelines for fair, progressively increasing schedule of wages
- Wage increases are to be based on apprentices' satisfactory progress
- Wage guidelines are designed to ensure wages reach 85-90 percent of journeyworker rate
- Incorporated wage guidelines into Apprenticeship Standards
- Developed definitions for youth worker career levels beyond apprenticeship
- Engaged stakeholder groups in review of proposed youth worker career levels
- Worked with local youth-serving organizations to adopt and prepare to operationalize definitions of youth worker career levels.

The cohort reported virtually no progress in this area until the fifteenth month, when they reported gains in developing a progressive wage scale based on apprentices' performance and competency and incorporated these guidelines into the Standards of Apprenticeship.

Site leaders may have progressed cautiously at first due to the complexity and sensitivity of compensation issues. Two site leaders explained:

> *The pay range/scale for apprentices will be difficult for agencies...*
>
> *The issue of wage scale will be a tenuous issue for us since wages vary from locale to locale. We feel we need to proceed with caution in setting standards since agencies will need to comply with those standards in order to be part of the YDPA initiative.*

During month 12, BEST site leaders used the *Guide for Collecting Community Input* to discuss the wage progression requirement with their prospective employers. BEST site leaders began this process by interviewing employers to find out the wage range for entry-level youth workers and for experienced youth workers in their organizations.

BEST site leaders entered their wage data on a worksheet and then calculated the average low-end and high-end wages across all of the employers. (See *Wage Data Worksheet* in Appendix D.) This process produced a "back-of-the-envelope" market rate for entry level (apprentice) and experienced (journeyworker) youth workers across participating employers in each community. This calculation also helped each BEST site determine whether an apprentice who started in the entry-level wage range would reach at least the "low-end" of the average journeyworker's wage range among participating employers.

NTI then used the worksheets to establish national guidelines for wage progression to pilot in BEST YDPA programs. Because NTI created the national wage ranges using real wage data from employers participating locally, BEST site leaders and employers were more confident about meeting the wage-related requirements of apprenticeship in the pilot year. Of course, Federal law requires that all apprentices be paid minimum wage or higher.

In month 15, BEST site leaders and their participating employers/planning committees had an opportunity to review and comment on the national guidelines for wage progression, as part of the draft National Guideline Standards.

The certified National Guideline Standards stipulate that the BEST intermediary, in partnership with participating local employers, needs to adopt a salary range and equivalent hourly rate that is within the National Guidelines and reflective of local market conditions. Locally, this step happens when the BEST sites register their programs with State Registration Agencies. The National Guidelines also call for employers to provide at least two, and up to five, wage increases over a two-year period based upon an apprentice's successful demonstration of competencies, hours logged, and results in the classroom. BEST sites, and in turn the employers they work with, have flexibility to respond to local organization's human resource policies.

Beyond promoting wage increases within apprenticeship programs, DOL also encouraged grantees—in the original YDPA funding announcement issued during March 2001—to:

> *Develop... a process to promote a career ladder for those graduates of the registered apprenticeship system (i.e., articulation into an Associates Degree or higher)*

However, during the grantee meeting convened by DOL and the National YDPA Clearinghouse during month five, DOL representatives emphasized "first things first": develop and register YDPA programs, then address the career ladder component if possible. In its second quarterly report to DOL, NTI affirmed its commitment to developing a career ladder strategy, while emphasizing that it would take time.

> *Establishing a career path for youth workers is a critical step... Ultimately, apprenticeship programs must be linked with certificate and degree programs, as well as career advancement and increased compensation as individuals demonstrate professional competency. Establishing a career path remains an important part of NTI's intermediate and long-term strategy... Taking its cue from DOL, NTI will focus its immediate use of DOL resources on apprenticeship design and piloting. [As a YDPA sustainability strategy], NTI will shape a multi-year "youth worker education and career advancement demonstration initiative" to engage up to 10 BEST YDPA sites in establishing a full career path and advancement system that will build upon BEST sites' experiences and successes in piloting apprenticeship, certificate, and degree programs.*

Using its core funding, NTI began pre-planning activities for the career ladder demonstration initiative during 2002.

Implications

Wage Progression, Recognition, and Career Advancement

- Even broaching the subject of wage progression may feel daunting, especially in tough economic times. However, it is essential to let employers know up front that wage increases are required for apprentices who perform well on the job. This gives employers an opportunity to assess whether they have the financial resources and human resource systems to meet the requirement, and to better understand the commitment they will be asked to make as participants in the program.
- National YDPA program developers will want to survey their affiliates to establish, for piloting purposes, a set of broad guidelines that can guide affiliates' compensation of apprentices during the YDPA program pilot.
- Introducing wage progression into an organization through apprenticeship may prompt some agency directors to revisit other aspects of their organizations' compensation and recognition systems.
- The apprentice and journeyworker positions represent two "rungs" on a career ladder for youth workers.

Part IV: Local Innovations

During the planning period, BEST site leaders made important contributions to the development of the national BEST YDPA program model, and also developed unique and compelling innovations for their local YDPA programs and youth-serving sectors. These contributions are summarized below.

Alternatives, Inc. (Alternatives) Hampton/Newport News BEST

Hampton/Newport News BEST site leaders participated (with New York leaders) on the OJT Training Program Committee charged with conceptualizing the BEST OJT program and contributing to the development of the training products for apprentices and journeyworkers. In particular, Alternatives staff made significant contributions to the development of the *OJT Guide for BEST Journeyworkers* and provided leadership in conceptualizing the progression of competencies—from discrete, foundational competencies in the first program segment to more integrated and complex competencies in the fifth program segment—that BEST apprentices develop through the OJT component.

In engaging its partner employers to develop a local wage range and progression for apprentices, Alternatives learned that one participating employer's wage rate for entry level youth workers stood below the rate paid by other participating employers in the BEST YDPA program. This employer decided to voluntarily increase the entry-level wage rate for youth workers in its organization so that its pay scale was on par with the local "market rate." This decision responds to the spirit and intent of apprenticeship—to promote high standards of performance and fairly compensate employees who meet or exceed those standards.

Working closely with partners at Thomas Nelson Community College, Alternatives aligned the YDPA related instruction component with the college's Career Studies Certificate in Youth Development. College partners agreed to revise the existing Career Studies Certificate to meet the related instruction requirements by adding related instruction requirements to existing courses. This decision increased the credits required to complete the career studies certificate from 27 to 29. Most credits completed in the Career Studies Certificate program can be applied to an Associates Degree in either Human Services or Social Science.

Partners for a Healthier Community (PHC), Springfield BEST

Springfield BEST site leaders also participated (with Kansas City site leaders) on the Marketing and Outreach Committee. In particular, Springfield BEST made significant contributions to the conceptualization of marketing products and strategies targeting apprentices, emphasizing the development of materials that are "hip," have "flavor" and recognize prospective apprentices' unique relationship with TV, music, and other cultural messages. In addition, Springfield BEST site leaders are contributing to the development of common local assessment, monitoring, and reporting activities for all BEST YDPA programs.

Springfield BEST site leaders are working with a local partner, REACH, to add information about the Springfield BEST YDPA program to a touch-screen tool made available by REACH in Springfield banks, malls, city hall, and other locations so that residents can access information about community services, programs, and opportunities.

Springfield BEST and Springfield College developed a Bachelor's degree program in Youth Development. The required courses emphasize material covered in sessions of the *Advancing Youth Development* course and the program incorporates opportunities for students to apply what they learn in local youth development programs. The *Introduction to Youth Development* course is offered at Springfield College currently and will begin at Springfield Technical Community College in summer 2003. Springfield BEST aligned its YDPA related instruction component with these courses.

Youth Development Institute (YDI), Fund for the City of New York, New York BEST

New York BEST site leaders participated (with Hampton/Newport News leaders) on the OJT Training Program Committee. New York BEST site leaders made significant contributions to the development of the *OJT Guide for BEST Apprentices*, including drafting original material for the Guide's first three program segments. The user-friendly tone, accessible design, and creative content reflected in the *Guide's* journal, concept, technique, and worksheet pages are attributable to the vision of YDI staff.

The Fund for the City of New York and the John F. Kennedy Jr. Institute for Worker Education (IWE) at the City University of New York (CUNY) co-sponsor a Youth Studies Certificate Program. The program includes five courses that link theory with practice by drawing upon students' work experience and a range of interdisciplinary academic works in the fields of psychology, social work, human services, education, and recreation. Participating senior colleges include the Lehman College in the Bronx and New York City College of Technology in Brooklyn. The Youth Studies Certificate program also includes a mandatory bridge class that focuses on basic reading and writing skills, while preparing students for college. The bridge class has proven effective in keeping students enrolled in college. New York BEST site leaders plan to align the YDPA related instruction component with this certificate program.

YouthNet of Greater Kansas City (YouthNet), Kansas City BEST

Kansas City BEST site leaders participated (with Springfield site leaders) on the Marketing and Outreach Committee charged with conceptualizing strategies and products that will facilitate BEST sites' local marketing and promotion of BEST YDPA programs to prospective employers and apprentices. In particular, YouthNet staff made significant contributions to the conceptualization of marketing products and strategies targeting employers, emphasizing the development of "crisp and clean" materials, with "clear identity and logo" that provide "succinct, quick answers to employers' questions." They also contributed to the development of indicators for group work, facilitation, and communication competencies.

Part V: Results, Reflections, and Next Steps

Results

The purpose of a planning period is to establish capacity for implementation—by developing a vision, program model, implementation strategies, financial and material resources, strategic partnerships, and the individual and organizational capabilities needed to operate and sustain a high quality YDPA program.

Below is a sampling of results achieved by NTI and BEST site leaders during the planning period to build national and local capacity to implement BEST YDPA programs.

- ✓ Four BEST intermediary organizations—in Hampton/Newport News (VA), Kansas City (MO), New York (NY), and Springfield (MA)—are poised to sponsor and support YDPA programs based on federally certified National Guideline Standards for BEST YDPA Programs.
- ✓ Four colleges are committed to delivering Related Instruction as partners in BEST YDPA programs.
- ✓ 11 local youth-serving organizations are committed to piloting an apprenticeship position and the BEST on-the-job training program within their agencies.
- ✓ 11 journeyworkers are committed and prepared—through NTI's first National BEST Training of Journeyworkers Program—to deliver BEST on-the-job training to apprentices and access BEST intermediaries for technical assistance.
- ✓ Up to 200 leaders of local youth-serving organizations (50 organizations per BEST intermediary) are aware of national YDPA initiative and the purpose of apprenticeship for youth workers.
- ✓ Up to 40 leaders (10 per BEST intermediary)—including youth workers, youth program and agency directors, college representatives, and WIA Board representatives—are steeped in the technical aspects of YDPA planning and implementation through their participation on BEST YDPA planning and advisory groups.
- ✓ There is a set of refined competencies for entry-level youth work, as well as associated indicators and assessment instruments, to support BEST on-the-job training activities.
- ✓ National resources—including the *OJT Guides* for BEST journeyworkers and apprentices—are available to support implementation and delivery of on-the-job training through BEST YDPA programs.

- ✓ BEST YDPA programs are being replicated/aligned in four more cities—Chicago (IL), New Haven (CT), Philadelphia (PA), and Washington (DC)—and up to eight small- and mid-sized communities. This strategy is intended to quadruple the number of registered BEST YDPA programs (16), employers (50), colleges (16), journeyworkers (50), and apprentices (50) in 2003-2004.

- ✓ This comprehensive report, *Establishing BEST Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship Programs for Youth Workers,* is available as a planning, informational and technical assistance resource to YDPA program developers, funders, and other key stakeholders nationally.

Reflections on "What it Takes"

Through phone interviews and the final evaluation instrument in month 17, BEST site leaders were asked to reflect upon the significance of YDPAs, as well as the opportunities and challenges presented to their organizations during the planning period in areas such as pre-existing capacity, resources and staffing, technical assistance, research activities, and others. An analysis of their reflections follows.

Pre-Existing Capacity

Some of the progress attributed to the cohort during the first quarter of planning related to the capacity that resided within BEST intermediary organizations and their community partners *prior* to the initiative. Future YDPA sites will need similar capacities, whether "pre-existing" or part of the developmental process. BEST site leaders shared examples of pre-existing conditions, like those below, that were especially critical to their progress.

Relationships with colleges (e.g., certificate studies in youth development, scholarships for certification, involvement on community college board of directors) provided a foundation for educational and training development. One site leader observed:

> *Our youth work certificate programs and strong relationships with the local community college that will account for the RTI took a lot of work off our plate because it already existed.*

Sustained relationships and collaborations with local youth-serving organizations made outreach to and participation from local stakeholders relatively easy. Connections with public and private funding agencies, business communities, and the media enhanced the sites' ability to generate in-kind support.

> *Definitely, the most important pre-existing condition was the longstanding relationships our staff has with youth-serving agencies that enabled us to know what their questions and concerns were prior to meeting with them about apprenticeship.*

Our strong relationship with a number of youth serving organizations enabled us to take on this initiative. In particular, our work with organizations in doing training and promoting professional development put us in a good position to move ahead with this.

There were no shortcuts to take – it took a long time – but the relationships with agencies created the space and the time that we needed.

Established reputation as leaders in youth development. Each of the four lead organizations has local, state and national visibility and credibility. They have credibility in their field and are perceived as trusted colleagues. Interviews suggest that reputation and credibility are related to long staff tenure at sites.

An existing database of graduates from BEST AYD courses provided project directors with a promising pool of eligible candidates from which to recruit journeyworkers and apprentices.

Outreach and Buy-In

Upon reflection, BEST site leaders candidly reported that their original conceptions of what it would take to develop YDPAs were overly optimistic. BEST site leaders became increasingly knowledgeable of the challenges and requirements entailed in the planning process. With the benefit of hindsight they were able to offer several observations on what they would have done differently knowing what they had learned over time. The main strategies included strengthening lines of communication, improving meeting logistics, and identifying larger numbers of potential partners. Future sites will benefit from these insights.

It is very difficult to initiate projects locally that are based on national projects that are still under development. While it would certainly be easier to plan locally if the national pieces were already in place, we know that this may not be an option.

We probably should have started by casting a wider net, knowing that interested parties would decrease. Instead, we started small and tried to build. This ultimately has worked, but we have probably overlooked some agencies and individuals...

We recommend using small working groups during the planning phase. Many of our stakeholders had an interest in participating in the development of YDPA, yet they contended with time constraints. A simple way around this challenge was placing participants in smaller working groups that focused only on short tasks and reported back to the larger group through e-mail for feedback. We used technology a lot to overcome the challenge of getting very busy people in a room together for meetings.

We think that the part of the equation that was underestimated is the pivotal role of the journeyworker and what incentives they may need to take on this huge commitment...

It is important to keep open, honest and constant conversation with employers and the journey workers about YDPA. Our employers bought into the concept quickly, but they did not necessarily know what they were getting into, so as more information came, so did the questions. We believe that more questions will come now that the Training-of-Journeyworkers Program has occurred. It is important to nurture the relationship with employers throughout the process and be responsive to their needs and questions. That does not imply that there is always an answer to be had, but that it is important to the relationship to surface the questions for the good of the initiative.

Resources and Staffing

The dearth of funding for local affiliates manifested itself most clearly by preventing BEST sites' assignment of dedicated project staff to work on YDPA planning activities. In many cases, project staff had to split their attention between planning YDPAs and implementing activities associated with funded projects. BEST site leaders stated that the initiative demanded extensive involvement of the executive director, particularly to promote and market the initiative with stakeholders. Future sites will need to confront the very real consequences of limited resources.

Having a financial plan [that allows for] maintaining more than the two staff who currently work full-time on other tasks is critical. While it is possible to do this project without a separate working staff that is focused primarily on YDPA, it is not ideal and poses significant challenges to the completion of tasks.

The... resource that would assist us in completing the planning process would be administrative assistance. Having an individual who has responsibility for getting out notices, making calls to the working groups, collecting their input, etc...

We will need additional funding in order to successfully implement YDPA...We will need ongoing assistance from NTI. A supportive network of people doing similar work in other cities is also helpful.

The coordination of YDPA is one staff person's position with an appropriate number of FTEs assigned to it. The executive director and BEST Project Director share oversight and administration duties.

Technical Assistance

While the four study sites took the lead in designing and implementing the planning process in their local areas, each was guided and assisted by NTI as well as DOL's apprenticeship technical representatives.

BEST site leaders found the most helpful technical assistance (TA) activities to be national convenings, individual phone/e-mail support, and conceptualization of design elements and products in partnership with NTI.

> *The technical assistance received from NTI has been most valuable, and in fact is what enabled us to stay involved in this initiative.*
>
> *The non-stop support by the NTI staff was...valuable. Having a "center" really made the process feel more grounded and possible. NTI helped us through some particularly challenging periods...*

Opportunities for direct face-to-face interaction tended to be most highly valued by BEST site leaders. In comparison, e-mail provided an inexpensive, immediate, and flexible mechanism for sharing information with the cohort as well as offering direct, individualized assistance. Finally, written information from NTI provided substantial guidance to the sites.

> *The face to face meetings are always the best way to get work done. Next is individual telephone calls and then e-mails.*
>
> *Telephone conversations with and written materials generated by NTI were a huge help.*
>
> *The meetings were the most valuable. Having an opportunity to be in a room together to share the details of our work and to strategize was great. It helped to shape the big picture and generate the excitement that is necessary to push through the tough times.*

Across the board, BEST site leaders agreed that the least useful TA format was cross-site conference calls, primarily because site leaders found it challenging to have in-depth discussions about complex topics with multiple stakeholders by phone.

> *Cross-site conference calls have not been that helpful for us.*

These observations will help structure the design and delivery of technical assistance in the future.

In addition to providing technical assistance in the traditional sense, NTI created opportunities for individuals and their affiliates to contribute to the actual design and development of key project deliverables. This form of facilitation was very well received. In particular, site leaders were especially positive about NTI's formation of the two committees—one focused on designing the on-the-job training model and the other focused on developing communications strategies—because it enabled them to utilize their unique talents, go deeper into a topic of interest to them, and benefit from the work of the other committee while not having to invest time and energy in that committee's work.

Research Activities

The systematic data collection strategy and associated process for analysis and data sharing was an integrated component of the YPDA planning process from the start. Instruments such as Site Status Reports, Technical Assistance Efficacy Reports, Interview Guidelines, and Planning Logs generated valuable information and documentation for NTI about successful strategies, innovations, challenges, and lessons learned. This information is especially helpful as NTI begins replicating BEST Apprenticeship Programs in other communities.

NIWL's early involvement helped ensure that NTI and its affiliates had a coherent framework or "roadmap" for approaching the planning and technical assistance activities. Observations by NTI staff combined with data collected from the sites clearly indicates that site leaders appreciated having such a roadmap for their work and a quarterly "prompt" to take stock of their progress on the initiative.

NTI also benefited from the consistent involvement of a neutral partner whose role was to promote clarity, consistency, coherence, and results in NTI and BEST site leaders' activities. NTI used preliminary findings from the evaluation to adjust its delivery of technical assistance, consistent with a continuous improvement philosophy.

Feedback from BEST site leaders provided convincing evidence that the research activities made a substantial contribution to the planning process. As anticipated, the data collection tools served to buttress the planning process for affiliates by providing a clear organizational structure to the steps and roles of the process. The site leaders' observations below make this case.

> *The site status reporting has been very beneficial to us. It helped us confirm and organize our roles, helping to keep us on target. Evaluation has not been cumbersome. Keeping to due dates has been [harder] when we are out of the office so much. The evaluations were customer-friendly, both written and by phone.*
>
> *The quarter to quarter checklist was very helpful in delineating the work. We will continue to use it for reference because we have a lot of work to do as the program hits the streets.*
>
> *The evaluation forms were helpful to us in that they laid out the planning steps in a comprehensive manner. While it was sometimes difficult to rate our progress on any particular item, is was useful to have an overview of the entire process.*
>
> *The evaluation tools helped to structure a lot of the planning process and was a useful set of questions that we used to ensure that we were on the right track. If it is to be used for upcoming sites, we would suggest segmenting the document into something that can be used as a timetable—i.e., which tasks should be completed by what time period.*

Drawing upon lessons learned from the planning phase, NTI reorganized the data collection instruments, making them more useful to BEST sites replicating BEST YDPA programs in other communities.

Next Steps

NTI and BEST site leaders will continue to work on BEST YDPA programs in the coming months and years. Planned activities include disseminating lessons learned from the planning period, piloting for two years locally registered BEST YDPA programs, replicating BEST YDPA programs in additional communities, establishing common data collection and reporting activities for all BEST YDPA Programs, and sustaining national and local BEST YDPA programs by securing public- and private sector funding to implement YDPA programs as part of a career ladder.

Disseminating Lessons Learned from the Planning Phase

To disseminate lessons learned from the planning period, NTI conducted a briefing in January 2003 for representatives of the Department of Labor and the National YDPA Clearinghouse, and developed the report *Establishing BEST Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship Programs for Youth Workers* for distribution to DOL representatives, DOL grantees working to establish YDPA programs, the National BEST Network, the National YDPA Clearinghouse, and other youth development organizations and clearinghouses. NTI anticipates producing and disseminating to a much wider audience a synthesis of this report, emphasizing lessons learned, implications, and recommendations.

Piloting BEST YDPA Programs

As of this writing, the four BEST intermediary organizations are working with Federal apprenticeship technical representatives and State Apprenticeship Councils or Bureaus of Apprenticeship Training to register their BEST YDPA programs. Meanwhile, they are also working with partner employers to select and prepare apprentices to enroll in their programs. Piloting of BEST YDPA programs will begin upon enrollment of apprentices and commencement of on-the-job training activities and/or related instruction courses. At that point, apprentices will begin earning their credential while working with young people in youth programs, as college partners and journeyworkers deliver training/instruction and assess apprentices' performance. Employers will work with BEST site leaders to implement processes and policies that support the delivery of on-the-job training within their organizations and to recognize the performance and results achieved by apprentices and other youth workers within their agencies. BEST site leaders will deliver technical assistance locally to support and recognize the participation of employers, journeyworkers, and apprentices. NTI's technical assistance to BEST sites will focus on addressing site-specific and cross-site implementation challenges. The pilot of BEST YDPA programs will conclude when the first cohort of apprentices receives apprenticeship credentials, in approximately two years.

Replicating BEST YDPA Programs

With funding from the Department of Labor, NTI is working with the New Haven B.E.S.T. Collaborative in Connecticut and the DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation in Washington, DC to replicate BEST YDPA programs in these cities. Based on lessons learned from working with the four study sites, NTI adapted the original SSR instrument to create a

Replication SSR, which the replication sites are using as a planning guide. NTI convened a technical assistance meeting with DC BEST and New Haven BEST representatives in November 2002 (month 11) and provides ongoing support to these sites by phone and e-mail.

NTI is also assisting up to four BEST sites—from among those currently implementing BEST YDPA programs—to bring BEST YDPA programs to small- and mid-sized communities in their surrounding regions. This replication strategy is expected to result in the registration of up to eight more BEST YDPA programs, and is part of NTI's national strategy called *Establishing Regional BEST Delivery Systems*.

The replication sites will register their programs under a more accelerated timeline, because they will "inherit" certified National Guideline Standards already developed in the planning period by NTI and the four study sites.

Two BEST sites—in Chicago (IL) and Philadelphia (PA)—developed YDPA programs during the planning period, but were outside of NTI's cohort. The Greater Philadelphia Federation of Settlements and the Youth Network Council plan to work with NTI to align their local Standards of Apprenticeship with the National Guideline Standards for BEST YDPA Programs.

Combined, these replication and alignment strategies will involve 16 BEST lead organizations in planning and implementing YDPA programs during 2003. These programs will also engage up to 16 colleges, 50 employers, 50 journeyworkers, and 50 apprentices, assuming there is one apprentice and one journeyworker per participating employer. If each apprentice and each journeyworker impacted by the BEST On-the-Job Training program works consistently with 10 young people each year, this collection of BEST YDPA programs will impact 1,000 youth during the pilot phase.

Evaluation and Reporting Results

NTI is working with BEST site leaders, DOL representatives, and other YDPA program sponsors to develop and implement common local assessment, monitoring, and reporting activities that would provide for collection, analysis, and reporting of progress and results at the individual, employer, program sponsor, and national network levels, and that would "feed into" or link with the Department of Labor's existing Federal apprenticeship information management system. The national plan will likely require all BEST sites to collect and report a common, but limited, set of apprenticeship-related data while encouraging BEST sites to collect a wider array of information that may be useful for their own local program implementation and monitoring.

Sustaining BEST YDPA Programs through a Career Ladder

Since 1997, NTI has worked to build the capacity of communities to establish local youth worker professional development systems that include: apprenticeship programs for entry-level youth workers (as of 2002); in-service training programs for youth workers and youth program supervisors; and youth work certificate and continuing education programs administered by local higher education institutions. In addition, as a result of this work, NTI has begun to codify

standards to guide youth worker training and youth worker performance, and to promote and support local professional networking and mentoring opportunities for practitioners.

As a sustainability strategy for BEST systems, including BEST YDPA programs, and as a strategy for contributing new innovations to the field, NTI is taking steps to develop and pilot a National Career Ladder for Youth Work that will effectively build upon these capacities.

Recognizing that there are many important questions to ask and perspectives to consider in envisioning a youth work career ladder demonstration initiative, NTI began a pre-planning process in 2002 to learn from experts in other fields and identify ways to fully engage, utilize, strengthen, and support the building blocks already put in place by BEST site leaders and youth-serving organizations, local youth-serving sectors, youth workers, and the broader collection of national, state, and local leaders, programs, and interests that promote youth development.

Based upon the results of pre-planning work, NTI will partner with national and local collaborators to carry out planning, development, and implementation activities associated with a national career ladder demonstration initiative.

YouthNet has been working since 2000 with a team comprised of youth-agency directors and board members, middle managers, front line youth workers, parents, young people and public and private funders to develop, adopt, and implement standards for programs targeting children and youth ages 5 - 18 years of age. YouthNet is working with these agencies to connect the implementation of YDPA programs to its standards framework.

In conjunction with the Metropolitan Community Colleges, YouthNet offers two certificates that can lead to an Associate of Arts degree with an emphasis in Human Services. The Youth Development Worker Certificate is a 12 college credit hour certificate and the Youth Work Certificate is a 33 college credit hour certificate which builds upon the 12 credit hour certificate and incorporates an additional 21 credit hours of general education classes. YouthNet aligned the YDPA related instruction component with these certificate programs. YouthNet also offers scholarships to cover the cost of tuition, books and fees for both certificates, and has earmarked scholarship funds for YDPA participants.

Part VI: Recommendations

YDPA programs have the potential to intersect with and positively impact a variety of individuals, organizations, funding entities and communities. The following recommendations are intended to facilitate discussion and action steps by a range of YDPA stakeholders.

Young People

Young people are the ultimate beneficiaries of YDPA programs. It is the development demonstrated by young people that will provide evidence of whether apprentices, journeyworkers, and YDPA programs are succeeding. What young people experience, believe about themselves, pursue to the best of their abilities, and see as the results of their activities—through their work with apprentices, journeyworkers, and other youth program staff—will indicate whether investments in YDPA programs are worthwhile.

The pathway toward a career in youth work is clearer, now that the Department of Labor has established the Youth Development Practitioner occupation title and created an entry point to the profession through apprenticeship. Older youth interested in this career path can access more information through school guidance counselors, the Department of Labor's O*NET system, local youth employment and other youth development programs, and YDPA program sponsors.

Recommendations:

- ✓ *Share observations—with apprentices, journeyworkers, employers, and YDPA sponsors—about the significance of the guidance, opportunities, support, and activities experienced while in youth programs.*
- ✓ *Contact school guidance counselors and youth workers, or check out the Department of Labor's Web site, for more information about launching a career in youth work and enrolling in a local YDPA program.*

Youth Workers

Youth workers have a role to play in helping the Department of Labor and other Federal departments learn more about the characteristics of their labor force and promoting greater visibility for the profession. Youth workers who use "Youth Development Practitioner" as their occupation title on official documents (such as Federal and State tax returns) will contribute to this understanding and recognition. The O*NET Code for the Youth Development Practitioner occupation is O*NET CODE: 13-1070-01.

Many YDPA programs target entry-level youth workers who want a foundational training and work experience for their careers. As a result, YDPA programs are appropriate for some, but not all youth workers. Youth workers interested in completing a youth work training/education program and receiving a youth work credential will want to assess which program or credential (e.g., apprenticeship, college certificate or degree, community-based training certificate) is best for them, in light of their career preparation and goals.

To find out about registered Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship programs in local communities or states, contact State Apprenticeship Councils, the National YDPA Clearinghouse, or the Department of Labor.

Recommendations:

- ✓ *Use "Youth Development Practitioner" as an occupation title on official documents.*
- ✓ *Assess how credentialing programs, including YDPA programs, fit with current career preparation and goals.*
- ✓ *Contact state or Federal offices of apprenticeship training, or the National YDPA Clearinghouse, to find local YDPA programs.*

Directors of Youth-Serving Organizations

While staff development takes time and costs money, it leads to positive impacts on staff and the young people who participate in programs. A complete organization or project budget will include staff development line items—such as performance-based competitive wages, staff training, effective supervision, and organizational supports. These are core budget items.

Staff turnover takes time away from program delivery, costs money, and has negative impacts on staff and young people. Organizations experiencing the effects of staff turnover have an opportunity to document the reasons and consequences, and make a case for reversing it through YDPA participation and other strategies.

Employers who participate in rigorous YDPA programs are demonstrating their commitment to high quality youth programs and good outcomes for youth. Directors of youth-serving organizations can leverage this commitment by bringing it to the attention of funders, stakeholders, program participants, and other community partners.

Recommendations:

- ✓ *Calculate the full cost of staff development and advocate for funding to support it, keeping in mind the costs resulting from not providing such opportunities.*
- ✓ *Establish or participate in a rigorous YDPA program to strengthen staff development, improve program quality and impact, and reduce staff turnover.*
- ✓ *Participate in local and national research activities that document the impact of YDPA on retention, recruitment, salaries, and benefits.*
- ✓ *Document and communicate to funders and constituents the organization's rationale for participating in a rigorous YDPA program, the resources deployed and needed to participate, and the positive results of participation.*

YDPA Program Developers and Sponsors

Many compelling program approaches are being seeded across the country. This diversity must be encouraged and preserved because it responds to unique system, organization, and labor market demands. But an observation made by many current YDPA program sponsors bears repeating: the YDPA credential will be more meaningful and portable nationally if there is a common, if limited, set of principles and expectations that bind all YDPA programs together. Program sponsors will contribute to "field-building" by sharing, discussing, and when feasible, aligning broad categories of program features. This might include voluntarily adopting broad categories of youth work competencies to guide on-the-job training or voluntarily adopting broad categories of learning experiences and activities (reflection, coaching sessions, practicing new competencies while working with youth, etc.) that all apprentices experience on the job.

Upon apprentices' completion of YDPA programs, YDPA program sponsors will need to provide solid evidence of the impact of their programs in areas such as youth work practice, staff retention, and youth outcomes. Efforts made now to develop a capability to collect, analyze, and report these findings—within and across YDPA programs—will enable program sponsors and funders to make and justify future support.

Recommendations:

- ✓ *Develop YDPA Programs that offer new innovations and approaches for the local youth-serving sector or national "field," and that respond to localized factors such as organization features and labor market demands.*
- ✓ *Discuss with other YDPA Program sponsors the broad principles and approaches that underlie their program models; then voluntarily develop a YDPA Program that responds to these principles and approaches.*
- ✓ *From the beginning, establish a results orientation and begin to develop a capability to document and communicate results—such as changes in youth work practice, impacts of apprentices' practice on young people, and changes in staff retention—to funders and stakeholders.*
- ✓ *At key junctures, such as the transition from planning to implementation (e.g., once the YDPA program is registered and apprentices are enrolled), organize opportunities to brief local stakeholders and Department of Labor representatives on the status and promise of the program.*

Higher Education Institutions

YDPA programs, as well as youth work certificate and degree programs, present new opportunities for colleges to expand their markets while responding to community and industry needs. College representatives who identify partners in the youth-serving sector, and work with these partners to conceptualize and develop college-based related instruction components for YDPA programs, will open the door to new business opportunities, increased student enrollment, and greater community recognition.

Recommendations:

- ✓ *Contact state or Federal offices of apprenticeship training, or the National YDPA Clearinghouse, to find organizations currently sponsoring or developing YDPA programs.*

- ✓ *Contact the National Training Institute for Community Youth Work to find out if there is a local BEST intermediary organization in the community.*

- ✓ *Partner with local youth development intermediary organizations to develop college-based courses, and certificate and degree programs that respond to the education, training, and credentialing needs of youth workers.*

- ✓ *Work with YDPA program sponsors to develop articulation agreements that enable apprentices to receive college credit for YDPA related instruction requirements met through college- and community-based courses.*

U.S. Department of Labor

The Department of Labor exercised bold leadership by establishing the Youth Development Practitioner occupation and achieving apprenticeship recognition for the occupation. DOL's continued support—as champion of YDPA programs and standards for the industry—is essential in the years ahead.

Many innovative and viable models of YDPA programs were developed with initial seed funding from the Department of Labor. DOL will maximize the impact of its initial investments by financially supporting and monitoring the implementation and impact of these approaches.

Recommendations:

- ✓ *Continue to champion the YDPA initiative and standards for this industry.*
- ✓ *Provide implementation funds to national and local YDPA program sponsors whose planning and development work was seeded initially by the Department and whose interim results and implementation strategies show promise for meeting the Department's goals.*
- ✓ *After a two-year implementation period, when a large group of apprentices has completed two-year YDPA programs across the country, analyze the results of the Department's initial investments in these YDPA programs.*
- ✓ *Disseminate information about the Youth Development Practitioner occupation and Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship programs to national organizations representing school guidance counselors, principals, teachers, and parent associations so that high school students interested in a youth work career can find their entry point to the profession.*

Public Funding Agencies and Policy Makers

Federal, state, and local agencies that fund youth-serving organizations and youth development programs will maximize their investments and achieve better outcomes for young people if they target resources toward organizations employing qualified, well-trained staff. In organizations where rigorous YDPA programs take hold, funders are likely to find good results—such as more competent staff, higher retention rates and associated cost-savings, and better prepared youth.

Because they target funds toward programs implemented by youth workers, Federal and State departments of labor, education, health, housing, justice, agriculture, and economic development have a stake in the success of local YDPA programs.

Local intermediary organizations and youth-serving organizations that implement rigorous YDPA programs, and prove their results, deserve sustained investments from funding agencies.

Recommendations:

- ✓ *Establish policies that target resources toward youth-serving organizations employing qualified, well-trained staff or taking steps, such as participating in a YDPA program, to improve staff competencies in order to achieve better results for young people.*
- ✓ *Promote and facilitate the coordination of multiple funding streams—such as funding from labor, education, health, housing, justice, agriculture, and economic development departments—in support of local programs for older youth that employ YDPA apprentices and journeyworkers.*
- ✓ *Sustain investments to youth-serving organizations that demonstrate a commitment to program quality through rigorous staff development and YDPA participation.*

Private Funders

Incentives—for the employers who agree to pilot YDPA programs, the journeyworkers who agree to coach and train apprentices, and apprentices who must find ways to cover the cost of related college instruction—go a long way toward garnering buy-in and rewarding the commitment and leadership demonstrated by these partners. Private funders will contribute to the success of YDPAs by providing modest-sized grants to intermediary organizations or employers for this purpose.

In communities and regions where private foundations coordinate their grantmaking to reach common goals, YDPA programs present a new opportunity for working together to strengthen local youth-serving sectors. Pooling resources into a "quality improvement fund" for YDPA program sponsors, collaboratively funding a local YDPA demonstration initiative, or providing sustained support to YDPA program infrastructure (such as local intermediaries) are among many options to consider.

Recommendations:

- ✓ *Invest in YDPA programs that promote and assess apprentices' development of specific competencies through well-structured and supported activities. To ensure documentation and communication of results, include funding for evaluation.*
- ✓ *Provide funding or other incentives for employers, journeyworkers, and apprentices who are serving as pioneers in this groundbreaking work.*
- ✓ *Financially support the implementation of local YDPA programs as part of core funding to YDPA sponsors and participating employers.*

Business Leaders

Business leaders know all too well: today's young people are tomorrow's workforce. Through structured interaction with competent youth workers, young people develop skills, knowledge, and social competencies necessary to experience healthy adolescence and to fully prepare for adulthood—and enter the world of work. Through participation in recreation, employment, arts, culture, academic enrichment, health, faith, indeed all quality youth programs, young people learn from youth workers how to plan, implement, and determine the success of their activities. They learn to set goals, organize time and resources in support of those goals, and manage success and setbacks. These developmental experiences, organized and supported day-in and day-out by youth workers, are building blocks for future workforce participation and productivity. Youth workers carry awesome responsibility, and must be adequately trained for it. Business leaders who champion rigorous YDPA programs see the connection: preparing today's youth worker will prepare tomorrow's workforce.

Recommendations:

- ✓ *Youth programs provide a foundation for young people's workforce participation. Keep in mind that these programs may reach young people through a focus on recreation, employment, arts, culture, academic enrichment, health, or faith.*
- ✓ *Recruit former participants from high quality youth programs to work in small businesses and corporations.*
- ✓ *Engage the corporation's community relations department or foundation in supporting youth-serving organizations with YDPA programs through grantmaking and sponsorship activities that also provide visibility to the company.*
- ✓ *Build coalitions among business and industry leaders that afford opportunities to develop community-wide or regional approaches that support professional development opportunities for youth workers.*
- ✓ *Champion YDPA programs as a strategy that prepares tomorrow's workforce by preparing today's youth worker.*

Appendix A:

BEST YDPA
Study Site Profiles

AED

Academy for Educational Development

NATIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTE
for COMMUNITY YOUTH WORK

Hampton/Newport News BEST: Alternatives, Inc.

Alternatives, Inc. (Alternatives) serves as the lead intermediary organization for the Hampton/Newport News BEST system of training, education, and professional development for youth workers. Founded in 1973, Alternatives is a not-for-profit corporation recognized as one of the Hampton Roads area's premier youth development organizations. The impact of their work is evident through the increasing opportunities they provide to and for young people so that they may be viewed as resources. For almost twenty years, Alternatives was an adolescent substance abuse prevention and early intervention services organization, but since 1991 has shifted its mission to using a youth development approach to community development issues. Currently, Alternatives is involved in approximately 45 local youth development projects (with community organizations, elementary and secondary schools, the school system's central administration, the city government, and neighborhoods) that recruit young people and adults, train them to work effectively with each other, and provide them with opportunities to accomplish meaningful results.

As the lead organization for Hampton/Newport News BEST, Alternatives develops, markets, coordinates, and delivers an array of BEST training and education programs for youth workers, youth program supervisors, and agency directors. For example, the AYD course is offered twice a year in a 28-hour, 7-session format and in the spring and summer as an 18-hour, 3-day intensive course.

In 1999, Alternatives formed a partnership with Thomas Nelson Community College (TNCC). Together, TNCC and Alternatives developed a Career Studies Certificate in Youth Development. The 29 college-credit certificate, which is awarded by TNCC's Department of Business, Public Services, and Social Sciences, includes human service-related classes as the basis of its curriculum, i.e., counseling, developmental psychology, and sociology. Alternatives is committed to ensuring that classes properly embed youth development principles and theories, so many of the classes, including the AYD course, are taught by Alternatives staff and other adjunct professors with youth development backgrounds. Alternatives aligned the YDPA related instruction component with the Career Studies Certificate.

Alternatives is working with three agencies to implement the BEST YDPA program: (1) Vision Point/Center for Child and Family Services, a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to providing the best possible counseling services to individuals, families and community organizations; (2) Hampton Parks & Recreation, a city department providing a variety of safe and healthy lifelong opportunities in the areas of recreation, education, culture and the environment; and (3) Hampton/Newport News Community Services Board, an operator and provider of community mental health/substance abuse and mental retardation treatment prevention.

For more information about Alternatives, Inc., contact Kathy Johnson, Executive Director, (757) 838-2330, kjohnson@altinc.org. Information is also available online at http://www.altinc.org.

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Kansas City BEST: YouthNet of Greater Kansas City

YouthNet of Greater Kansas City (YouthNet) serves as the lead intermediary organization for the Kansas City BEST system of training, education, and professional development for youth workers. YouthNet works to improve young people's life opportunities by promoting quality youth development programs that occur in the afterschool hours and are delivered by community-based agencies whose missions include serving children, youth and families. YouthNet's strategies include: (1) engaging young people, parents, youth-serving agencies, funders and other stakeholders to establish and implement a common set of standards of quality performance for youth programs; (2) providing training, educational opportunities and a range of technical assistance to support agencies as they integrate the standards into their day-to-day operations; and (3) working in collaboration with youth-serving agencies to define a fair external monitoring and assessment process.

As the lead organization for Kansas City BEST, YouthNet develops, markets, coordinates, and delivers an array of BEST training and education programs for youth workers, youth program supervisors, and agency directors. In 1996, YouthNet formed a partnership with Metropolitan Community Colleges and through that partnership offers two certificates that can lead to an Associate of Arts degree with an emphasis in Human Services. The Youth Development Worker Certificate is a 12-credit hour certificate awarded by the Human Services department; and the Youth Work Certificate, awarded by the Education department, is a 33-credit hour certificate which builds upon the 12-credit hour certificate and incorporates an additional 21 credit hours of general education classes. YouthNet offers scholarships to cover the cost of tuition, books and fees for both certificates so that any youth worker and/or prospective youth worker can have the opportunity to take the credit hour classes. In addition, through a partnership with NTI, YouthNet expanded its local training work into a regional system—called Midwest BEST—by bringing professional development opportunities to youth workers throughout a network of communities in a four state region (Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska and Iowa). YouthNet also sponsors an annual *Youth Work* conference that brings together course graduates, agency directors, and other stakeholders to offer networking and educational and learning opportunities.

YouthNet is working with three agencies to implement the BEST YDPA program: (1) Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Kansas City, an organization that promotes the development of self-esteem, values, and skills for boys and girls, ages 5-18, with special emphasis on youth from disadvantaged circumstances; (2) Don Bosco, an organization with a youth development community center that provides a safe haven for hundreds of youth each year through intramural sports, after-school programs, summer camps and peer support groups; and (3) Whatsoever Community Center, a comprehensive, community-based organization that fulfills the holistic needs of people ages 3-90 in Northeast Kansas City.

For more information about YouthNet, contact Deborah Craig, President, (816) 221-8008, debcraig@kcyouthnet.org. Information is also available online at http://www.kcyouthnet.org.

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for COMMUNITY YOUTH WORK

New York BEST: Youth Development Institute of the Fund for the City of New York

The Youth Development Institute (YDI) of the Fund for the City of New York serves as the lead intermediary organization for the New York BEST system of training, education, and professional development for youth workers. YDI works to impact youth policies, programs, and practices so that young people have increased chances of healthy adolescence and successful adulthood. YDI works with community-based organizations, schools, and government agencies to: (1) strengthen the capacity of community-based organizations to serve as an effective infrastructure of supports for youth and as advocates for a youth development agenda; (2) promote adoption of a youth development philosophy in public sector programs and services; and (3) facilitate development of innovative inter-governmental collaborations to provide neighborhood-based youth development services.

As the lead organization for New York BEST, YDI develops, markets, coordinates, and delivers an array of BEST training and education programs for youth workers, youth program supervisors, and agency directors. For example, YDI offers a condensed two and one-half day AYD training to the network of New York City Beacons, Beacons in other states, WIA contractors, and other community-based organizations. YDI also offers a special workshop on youth development—designed to help agencies expand their definitions of youth participation and learn new ways of promoting youth leadership. This workshop is offered to the new school/community-based organization (CBO) partnerships and to a variety of CBOs. In addition, YDI formed a committee of youth development leaders to examine the core competencies of youth workers and as a result produced a handbook, *Core Competencies of Youth Workers*, which now serves as a professional development guide to those hiring youth workers and to youth workers who are seeking to enhance their own knowledge, skills, and abilities.

In 1999, YDI formed a partnership with City University of New York (CUNY). This partnership formed as a result of an initial pilot that incorporated a college bridge class allowing youth workers to take courses at the college. CUNY offers two 12-college credit Youth Studies Certificates and both embed theoretical principles and practical applications. Courses in the certificate program at CUNY Technical College focus more on the human services profession and may be taken concurrently. Courses in the certificate program at CUNY Lehman College focus more on youth practice and are structured sequentially, as a part of a four-course curriculum. YDI is working to align its related instruction for the YDPA program with the Youth Studies Certificates.

Currently, YDI is working with three agencies to implement the BEST YDPA program: (1) Harlem Children's Zone, a mult-agency that operates two Beacons, several youth leadership initiatives, and comprehensive services for entire families; (2) Forest Hills Community House, a settlement house that operates a Beacon and a 21st Century Learning Community Center; and (3) Good Shephard Services, a large agency that operates a Beacon, several other school-based programs, and residential foster care. All of these agencies have a strong commitment to staff development and to building the field.

For more information about New York BEST, contact Jessica Mates, BEST Project Manager, (212) 925-6675, jmates@fcny.org. Information is also available online at http://www.fcny.org.

AED

Academy for Educational Development

NATIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTE
for COMMUNITY YOUTH WORK

Springfield BEST: Partners for a Healthier Community

Partners for a Healthier Community (PHC) serves as the lead intermediary organization for the Springfield BEST system of training, education, and professional development for youth workers. PHC is a community capacity-building nonprofit organization that provides a wide range of support to and for the community including advocacy, training, networking, research, public education, evaluation, and strategic and program planning as a neutral convener and facilitator of networks to promote community collaborations. To optimize community health and strengthen community care systems, its three programs address preschool health (immunization), school health, and youth development and are designed around the needs of children and youth, and the well-being of families. PHC's youth development efforts focus on replicating exemplary youth programs by building performance capacity through training and education services and by bringing together the city's youth service agencies to collaborate and campaign for change on the behalf of children and youth.

Springfield BEST develops, markets, coordinates, and delivers an array of BEST training and education programs for youth workers, youth program supervisors, and agency directors. For example, Springfield BEST offers a 4-hour youth development orientation course to youth workers of Springfield BEST's new partnering organizations; a 28-hour AYD course to youth workers; and an AYD course to supervisors and managers. In addition, Springfield BEST offers *After AYD: Implementing and Utilizing the Fundamentals of AYD*, a program for AYD graduates that helps build their use of youth development in their daily work and also helps managers and supervisors understand and support this progression.

In 2002, Springfield BEST formed a partnership with Springfield College, Springfield Technical Community College, and Holyoke Community College and is currently working to establish partnerships with other colleges throughout western and central Massachusetts. Together, Springfield BEST and Springfield College developed a Bachelor's degree program in Youth Development. The required courses emphasize material covered in sessions of the *Advancing Youth Development* course. The program also incorporates opportunities for students to become engaged with local youth development programs so that theoretical principles can translate into practical learning experiences. There is also opportunity for students to tailor elective classes to emphasize Human Services Administration. The *Introduction to Youth Development* course is offered at Springfield College currently and will begin at Springfield Technical Community College in summer 2003. Springfield BEST aligned its related instruction for YDPA program with these courses.

Springfield BEST is working with two agencies to implement the BEST YDPA program: (1) Girls, Inc. of Holyoke, an organization that nurtures girls' ability and interest in science, math, and technology, fosters self-respect and leadership skills, builds athletic skills and team spirit; and helps to overcome the effects of discrimination; and (2) Generating Tomorrow's Future Today, a nonprofit youth development organization that uses the arts and entertainment industry as a vehicle to help young people, ages 5-21, express themselves.

For more information about Springfield BEST, contact Kendall Clawson, BEST Project Director, (413) 794-1739, kendall.clawson@bhs.org

Appendix B:

BEST YDPA
Research Instruments

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BEST Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship Program

SITE STATUS REPORT—Sample

Instructions: Please complete and submit the Status Report form by September 23, 2002 to ***Keith MacAllum*** *at NIWL at fax: (202) 884-8422. If you wish to provide additional comments, feel free to attach them to this form.*

Date: _____

***BEST* Affiliate Name:** _____

Please circle the number that represents the degree to which your site has completed the listed activities/components, as steps of the Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship Program planning process.

- Circle "1" if the activity has not taken place yet.
- Circle "2" if the activity is in a rudimentary stage.
- Circle "3" if the activity has taken place but the component still needs some refining.
- Circle "4" if the activity is complete.

PART I: INFRASTRUCTURE FOR OVERSIGHT, MANAGEMENT, AND COORDINATION

A. LOCAL STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

Assigned responsibilities for managing the initiative to *BEST* site staff person(s)	1	2	3	4
Organized a planning committee	1	2	3	4
Representatives on the planning committee include:	-	-	-	-
• Youth worker(s)	1	2	3	4
• Youth program supervisor(s)	1	2	3	4
• Youth-serving organization agency director(s)	1	2	3	4
• *Advancing Youth Development* facilitator(s)	1	2	3	4
• Community college and/or four-year college or university administrator(s)	1	2	3	4
• Faculty from college/university-based youth work certificate/degree program	1	2	3	4
• Other training program representative(s)	1	2	3	4
• Local Apprenticeship and Training Representative (ATR)	1	2	3	4
• WIA Board (WIB) Chair or other Board representative	1	2	3	4
• WIB Youth Council Chair or other Council representative	1	2	3	4
• Local sponsors of high quality apprenticeship programs in other occupations.	1	2	3	4
• Persons representing the intended target population of apprentices and the youth they serve, (e.g. representatives of persons with disabilities)	1	2	3	4

• Public- and/or private-sector funders	1	2	3	4
• Local policy makers and/or opinion leaders	1	2	3	4
Conducted orientation for planning committee	1	2	3	4
Activities completed by the planning committee include:	-	-	-	-
• Defined planning committee's purpose, deliverables, and timetable	1	2	3	4
• Developed vision for apprenticeship program and infrastructure	1	2	3	4

B. LOCAL ASSESSMENT AND RESEARCH TO SUPPORT PROGRAM DESIGN

Assessed apprenticeship-related needs/priorities/resources of the following groups:	-	-	-	-
• Youth workers	1	2	3	4
• Youth-serving organizations, including WIA-funded organizations	1	2	3	4
• Training and related instruction providers, including *AYD* facilitators and (if site is a Youth Opportunity Grant site) the Youth Opportunity Grant Leadership Institute	1	2	3	4
• Curriculum developers, publishers, and clearinghouses, including Sar Levitan Center clearinghouse	1	2	3	4
Collected preliminary information about the local youth work labor market, particularly wage and compensation information	1	2	3	4
Reviewed planning, design, and implementation approaches proposed by other *BEST* sites implementing YDP apprenticeship programs	1	2	3	4
Reviewed planning, design, and implementation approaches proposed by other DOL grantees (non-*BEST* affiliated)	1	2	3	4
Solicited guidance from local sponsors of existing, high quality apprenticeship programs in other occupations	1	2	3	4
Reviewed sample Apprenticeship Standards for local apprenticeship programs in other occupations	1	2	3	4
Reviewed DOL reports about wage and compensation levels for occupations in local region.	1	2	3	4

C. LOCAL COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH STRATEGIES

Reviewed existing DOL informational materials (e.g. CD, brochure, etc.)	1	2	3	4
Developed database or list of contacts to receive marketing/promotional materials	1	2	3	4
Developed processes for updating and managing contacts	1	2	3	4
Developed locally-tailored marketing/promotional materials	1	2	3	4
Incorporated apprenticeship information into organizational website	1	2	3	4
Presented and/or shared apprenticeship information at local meetings with stakeholder groups	1	2	3	4
Convened key stakeholders for the purpose of outreach and education	1	2	3	4
Developed list of local press contacts (print, television, radio)	1	2	3	4
Developed materials for local press (e.g. press release, fact sheet, etc.)	1	2	3	4

Provided copies of communications materials to NTI for national clearinghouse	1	2	3	4

D. Local Program Evaluation

Developed questions to guide ongoing evaluation of the apprenticeship program in terms of quality and impact	1	2	3	4
Developed data collection instruments and processes to support ongoing evaluation activities	1	2	3	4
Assigned staff to conduct ongoing evaluation activities	1	2	3	4
Developed plan for incorporating evaluation findings into ongoing planning and program improvement	1	2	3	4

E. Local Financing and Sustainability

BEST Site lead organization's board of directors approved incorporation of apprenticeship into organization's core activities	1	2	3	4
Established community advisory committee to provide ongoing guidance to implementation and sustainability	1	2	3	4
Community advisory committee includes appropriate representation from key stakeholders and constituents (as with planning committee)	1	2	3	4
Developed annual apprenticeship program budget	1	2	3	4
Determined apprenticeship program fee structure (revenue generation)	1	2	3	4
Developed strategies for attracting private-sector funds (foundations, United Way)	1	2	3	4
Developed strategies for attracting federal, state, and/or local public-sector funds	1	2	3	4
Developed strategies for minimizing operating costs while maintaining quality	1	2	3	4
Developed strategies for attracting in-kind contributions (time, facilities, food)	1	2	3	4
Secured commitments from stakeholders to support ongoing implementation	1	2	3	4
Researched prospective sources of scholarship funds and/or endowment funds	1	2	3	4
Funding strategies reflect support for incentives, wage increases and recognition for youth workers moving up a career ladder	1	2	3	4
Developed coherent, written plan for fundraising/sustainability in the form of a funding proposal.	1	2	3	4

Part II: Apprenticeship Program Requirements

A. Training/Instructional Components and Requirements

Developed list of core competencies for youth worker/youth development practitioner	1	2	3	4
Used *AYD* as a resource in developing the core competencies list	1	2	3	4
Developed locally-tailored outline of on-the-job work processes and allocation of time to each process, based on core competencies	1	2	3	4
Developed locally-tailored outline of related instruction in technical subjects related to core competencies	1	2	3	4
Defined experience, training, or skills that qualify applicants for advanced standing and commensurate wage progression in the apprenticeship program.	1	2	3	4

Developed locally-tailored tools for documenting credit to be given for prior experience	1	2	3	4
Established the term of apprenticeship (# hours)	1	2	3	4
Established the term of probationary period	1	2	3	4
Established numeric ratio of apprentices to journeyworkers	1	2	3	4
Established minimum qualifications for persons entering apprenticeship program	1	2	3	4
Established minimum qualifications for persons providing on-the-job training	1	2	3	4
Established minimum qualifications for persons providing related instruction	1	2	3	4
Established minimum safety standards for equipment and training facilities	1	2	3	4
Solicited and received feedback from local ATR on proposed training/instructional components and requirements	1	2	3	4

B. Program Policies, Processes, Agreements, and Registration

Established program registration policies and processes	1	2	3	4
Established program grievance policies and processes	1	2	3	4
Established provisions for cancellation and deregistration of the program	1	2	3	4
Developed written Apprenticeship Standards	1	2	3	4
Developed written Apprenticeship Agreement, including Apprenticeship Standards	1	2	3	4
Solicited and received feedback from local ATR on proposed policies, processes, and agreements	1	2	3	4
Voluntarily registered apprenticeship program with Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training or State apprenticeship agency	1	2	3	4

Part III: Apprenticeship Program Design

A. Apprentices

Defined target population for apprenticeship outreach/recruitment	1	2	3	4
Developed equal opportunity policy reflecting full and fair opportunity to apply for apprenticeship	1	2	3	4
Conducted outreach and recruitment activities to reach target population	1	2	3	4
Developed outreach strategies targeting secondary schools	1	2	3	4
Developed pre-apprenticeship program for secondary school students and/or apprentice candidates requiring basic skills preparation (e.g. bridge course)	1	2	3	4
Organized apprentice selection committee	1	2	3	4
Developed apprentice selection criteria	1	2	3	4
Established apprentice selection process and schedule	1	2	3	4
Developed application materials and interview protocols	1	2	3	4
Made application materials available, e.g. via postal mail or internet	1	2	3	4

Established record-keeping systems related to apprentices	1	2	3	4
Established enrollment policies and processes	1	2	3	4
Developed tools and materials to facilitate enrollment	1	2	3	4
Selected apprentices for pilot period	1	2	3	4
Apprenticeship Agreements signed by selected apprentices	1	2	3	4
Conducted program orientation for apprentices	1	2	3	4

B. HOST ORGANIZATIONS

Established selection criteria for youth-serving organizations serving as hosts/employers of journeyworkers and apprentices. Criteria include organizational commitment to (1) progressive wage increases and (2) apprentices' career advancement within the organization.	1	2	3	4
Conducted outreach and recruitment activities to reach youth-serving organizations qualified to host journeyworkers and apprentices	1	2	3	4
Established host organization selection process and schedule	1	2	3	4
Developed materials and protocols to support selection of host organizations	1	2	3	4
Made application materials available to prospective host organizations	1	2	3	4
Established record-keeping systems related to host organizations	1	2	3	4
Selected host organizations for pilot period	1	2	3	4
Memoranda of understanding signed by selected host organizations	1	2	3	4
Conducted program orientation for host organizations	1	2	3	4

C. JOURNEYWORKERS

Developed selection criteria for journeyworkers	1	2	3	4
Established journeyworker selection process and schedule	1	2	3	4
Developed application materials and interview protocols for journeyworkers	1	2	3	4
Made application materials available to journeyworker candidates	1	2	3	4
Established record-keeping systems related to journeyworkers	1	2	3	4
Selected journeyworkers for pilot period	1	2	3	4
Provided program orientation for journeyworkers	1	2	3	4
Developed training program for participating journeyworkers	1	2	3	4
Conducted training program for participating journeyworkers	1	2	3	4
Established schedule of debriefing sessions for journeyworkers	1	2	3	4
Developed strategies for train-the-trainer system for delivery of on-the-job training	1	2	3	4

D. TRAINING PROVIDERS

Identified topics for which *BEST* sites can serve as training providers	1	2	3	4
Identified other prospective training providers for delivery of related instruction	1	2	3	4

Built upon existing partnerships with higher education institutions	1	2	3	4
Conducted outreach/marketing to prospective training providers	1	2	3	4
Developed selection criteria for training providers	1	2	3	4
Established training provider selection process and schedule	1	2	3	4
Selected qualified training providers	1	2	3	4
Negotiated training agreements with selected training providers	1	2	3	4
Established record-keeping systems related to training providers	1	2	3	4
Developed strategies for a train-the-trainer system for related instruction	1	2	3	4

PART IV: ESTABLISHING LINKAGES TO PROMOTE AND SUPPORT ACADEMIC AND CAREER ADVANCEMENT

A. ACADEMIC ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS

Identified local higher education institutions with youth work certificate programs, two-year degree programs, and/or four-year degree programs	1	2	3	4
Conducted outreach to administrators and faculty of higher education institutions offering youth work certificate and degree programs	1	2	3	4
Organized a Working Group with representatives from YDP apprenticeship programs and college-based certificate/degree programs to develop articulation plan	1	2	3	4
Identified ways in which the YDP apprenticeship program's OJT and related instruction requirements meet the requirements of college-based certificate and degree programs	1	2	3	4
Developed administrative processes to support transferability of apprenticeship "credits" to and among participating higher education institutions	1	2	3	4
Developed administrative processes to support "dual accreditation," enabling apprentices to apply their apprenticeship "credits" toward an Associates Degree	1	2	3	4
Identified an array of student supports that will help ensure apprentices' successful matriculation from apprenticeship programs to college-based programs	1	2	3	4
Developed articulation agreements with higher education institutions	1	2	3	4

B. WAGE SCHEDULES, RECOGNITION, AND CAREER ADVANCEMENT

Developed guidelines for fair, progressively increasing schedule of wages	1	2	3	4
Wage increases are to be based on apprentices' satisfactory progress	1	2	3	4
Guidelines are designed to ensure wages reach 85-90% journeyworker rate	1	2	3	4
Incorporated wage guidelines into Apprenticeship Standards	1	2	3	4
Developed definitions for youth worker career levels beyond apprenticeship (e.g. YW 1, YW 2, YW 3)	1	2	3	4
Engaged stakeholder groups in review of proposed youth worker career levels	1	2	3	4
Worked with local youth-serving organizations to adopt and prepare to operationalize definitions of youth worker career levels.	1	2	3	4

AED

Academy for Educational Development

BEST Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship Program Initiative

SAMPLE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE EFFICACY FORM

Please complete and submit the TA Efficacy form by January 18, 2002 to ***Keith MacAllum*** *at fax: (202) 884-8422. If you wish to provide additional comments, feel free to attach them to this form.*

Date: _____

BEST Site: _____

1. **For each technical assistance activity or resource provided during the quarter, please circle "1" for *strongly agree*; "2" for *agree*; "3" for *somewhat agree*; "4" for *disagree*; or "5" for *strongly disagree.***

   A) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITY:** ***Cross-Site Conference Call (11/6/01):*** *Agenda included local planning updates, review and discussion of revised occupation description, review and discussion of OJT outline integrating AYD and DOL frameworks, skim of DOL's national guideline standards draft, discussion of agenda topics/format for national YDPA meetings in Baltimore.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The call *met my expectations.*	1	2	3	4	5
The call *was relevant* to my site's needs.	1	2	3	4	5
The call *was helpful in advancing my work locally to establish YDP Apprenticeship Programs.*	1	2	3	4	5

   B) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITY:** ***Email Summary of Cross-Site Conference Call (11/6/01)***

The notes *met my expectations.*	1	2	3	4	5
The notes *were relevant* to my site's needs.	1	2	3	4	5
The notes *were helpful in advancing my work locally to establish YDP Apprenticeship Programs.*	1	2	3	4	5

   C) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITY:** ***BEST YDPA Meeting in Baltimore (11/29/01 and 11/30/01)***

The meeting *met my expectations.*	1	2	3	4	5
The meeting was *relevant* to my site's needs.	1	2	3	4	5
The meeting was *helpful in advancing my work locally to establish YDP Apprenticeship Programs.*	1	2	3	4	5

What I found most useful about the BEST YDPA meeting: _____

_____

_____

_____

Recommendations for the next BEST YDPA meeting: _____

_____

_____

_____

D) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITY: ***Individual phone and/or email support***

The phone conversation(s) or email exchange(s) *met my expectations.*	1	2	3	4	5
The phone conversation(s) or email exchange(s) *were relevant* to my site's needs.	1	2	3	4	5
The phone conversation(s) or email exchange(s) were *helpful in advancing my work locally to establish YDP Apprenticeship Programs.*	1	2	3	4	5

Check here if you did not request individual phone/email support this quarter: _____

2. Did your site access other forms of technical assistance during the quarter?

____ Yes ____ No

If yes, who provided the technical assistance (e.g. local ATR, other experts)? _____

_____

_____

If yes, what topics were covered by the activity/resource? _____

_____

_____

3. What are your top priorities for technical assistance at this juncture? Topics/issues/formats?

_____

_____

_____

AED

Academy for Educational Development

BEST Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship Program Initiative

Planning Activity Log

Please fill out upon completion of a major planning activity. Please submit completed form to Keith MacAllum at fax: (202) 884-8422.
Note: An example of a planning activity might be a local planning committee meeting in a chaired/facilitated format focused on the core design elements of the apprenticeship program.

Name: _____ **BEST Site:** _____ **Date:** _____

Type of Planning Activity: _____

Met With: _____

Meeting Format: _____

Purpose: _____

In your opinion, how useful is this event in advancing the establishment of YDP Apprenticeship Programs?

___ Very Useful ___ Useful ___ Somewhat Useful ___ Not Really Useful

Why? _____

Outcome and Next Steps: _____

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Final Evaluation

As the final data collection activity of the YDPA planning phase, we are asking representatives from each of the participating BEST sites to take a few moments to consider the following 10 questions and provide your best objective retrospective review of first 12-15 months of design and development. Obviously, there are no right or wrong answers to these questions, only your candid and informed opinion based on your direct experience in the project. Completion will simply entail entering your responses to each question directly into the Word document and returning the questionnaire via e-mail to Keith MacAllum at kmacallu@aed.org.

1. What were the pre-existing conditions within your site that best prepared you to take on this initiative? What was lacking or most in need of immediate attention?

2. In retrospect, how would you characterize the planning process at your site? Reflect on the sequence and chronology of events. What would you have done differently given what you know now?

3. Estimate and describe the level and type of staff commitment dedicated by your site to YDPA (e.g. oversight, coordination, administration). How did this correspond with the scope of work? What would have been your ideal staffing scenario?

4. Think about the various forms of technical assistance your site has received. What has been most valuable? What types of information, resources or assistance would have improved the process?

5. Evaluation has been an integrated component from the start. How did the evaluation process help or hinder the planning process? What has been the value, if any, to your site of evaluation as TA and capacity building?

6. What one accomplishment are you most proud of?

7. Has new capacity been created within your site as a result of participation in YDPA? If so, what kind? How does that new capacity support your local apprenticeship program? In what ways does it strengthen the local BEST professional development system generally? Has this initiative detracted from your work locally? If so, how?

8. What lessons did you learn about planning and development that you think are important to share with DOL, NTI, and future sites? What advice can you offer? What would you do differently next time?

9. What additional resources will be needed to successfully implement your YDPA program?

10. In your opinion, what are the implications of youth work apprenticeship for the field?

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Sample Meeting Evaluation Form

BEST Apprenticeship Program
Training of Journeyworkers Program
October 1-2, 2003
Washington, DC

1. **For each session in the Training of Journeyworkers Program, please circle "1" for *strongly agree;* "2" for *agree*; "3" for *somewhat agree*; "4" for *disagree*; or "5" for *strongly disagree.***

   A) **BEST Apprenticeship Programs**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The session *met my expectations.*	1	2	3	4	5
The session *was relevant* to my needs.	1	2	3	4	5
The session will *help advance my work on apprenticeship.*	1	2	3	4	5

What I found most useful: _____

_____

Recommendations for next time: _____

_____

B) Orientation to BEST On-the-Job Training Program and Journeyworker Roles & Responsibilities

The session *met my expectations.*	1	2	3	4	5
The session *was relevant* to my needs.	1	2	3	4	5
The session will *help advance my work on apprenticeship.*	1	2	3	4	5

What I found most useful: _____

_____

Recommendations for next time: _____

_____

C) BEST Apprenticeship Leader's Guide

The session *met my expectations*.	1	2	3	4	5
The session *was relevant* to my needs.	1	2	3	4	5
The session will *help advance my work on apprenticeship*.	1	2	3	4	5

What I found most useful: _____

_____

Recommendations for next time: _____

_____

D) Practicing (and Debriefing) Journeyworker Tasks—Part I

The session *met my expectations*.	1	2	3	4	5
The session *was relevant* to my needs.	1	2	3	4	5
The session will *help advance my work on apprenticeship*.	1	2	3	4	5

What I found most useful: _____

_____

Recommendations for next time: _____

_____

E) Observing and Assessing Apprentices

The session *met my expectations*.	1	2	3	4	5
The session *was relevant* to my needs.	1	2	3	4	5
The session will *help advance my work on apprenticeship*.	1	2	3	4	5

What I found most useful: _____

_____

Recommendations for next time: _____

_____

F) Practicing Journeyworker Tasks—Part II

The session *met my expectations.*	1	2	3	4	5
The session *was relevant* to my needs.	1	2	3	4	5
The session will *help advance my work on apprenticeship.*	1	2	3	4	5

What I found most useful: _____

_____

Recommendations for next time: _____

_____

2. Please provide feedback on the <u>overall meeting</u>. Circle "1" for *strongly agree;* "2" for *agree*; "3" for *somewhat agree*; "4" for *disagree*; or "5" for *strongly disagree.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The overall meeting *met my expectations.*	1	2	3	4	5
The overall meeting *was relevant* to my needs.	1	2	3	4	5
The overall meeting will *help advance my work on apprenticeship.*	1	2	3	4	5

What I found most useful: _____

_____

_____

Recommendations for next time: _____

_____

_____

THANK YOU!!

Appendix C:

BEST YDPA
On-the-Job Training
Product Contents

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BEST YDPA On-the-Job Training Product Contents

The National Training Institute for Community Youth Work's BEST YDPA On-the-Job Training products are intended to facilitate apprentices' development of specific youth work competencies and journeyworkers' coaching and training of apprentices on the job. The contents of these resources are listed below.

Contents of On-the-Job Training Guide for BEST Journeyworkers

Program Overview: Provides information about the purpose, format, and requirements of apprentices and journeyworkers of the BEST OJT Program, in question-and-answer format

Journeyworker Tasks: Includes tips for recognizing learning styles, making training plans, motivating apprentices, explaining and demonstrating best practices, coaching apprentices, observing apprentices as they apply knowledge and techniques to their work with young people, assessing apprentices' proficiency and progress, and keeping notes and records

Sample Training Plans: For every two-week period of the OJT program, a sample plan with suggestions for training activities, motivational points, coaching points, and record-keeping reminders

Assessment Instruments: For each segment of the OJT program, a detailed assessment instrument that the journeyworker completes to evaluate and document the apprentices' development of competencies

Plus, all contents of the OJT Guide for BEST Apprentices

Contents of On-the-Job Training Guide for BEST Apprentices

Program Overview: Provides information about the purpose, format, and requirements of the BEST OJT Program

Training Objectives: A list of specific training objectives, i.e., competencies, that apprentices are expected to develop and demonstrate during each segment of the OJT program

Self-Assessment Instruments: A checklist that apprentices can use to document their level of proficiency in competency areas at the beginning of each program segment

Concepts and Theories: Concepts, theories, and principles related to youth development and youth work practice, including the physiological, biological, social, and other changes taking place in adolescents; the positive developmental outcome areas for youth; the opportunities, services and supports that promote young people's development; and many others

Tips and Techniques: Guidelines for applying techniques—such as listening actively, demonstrating empathy, and setting boundaries—while working with youth

Exercises and Activities: Opportunities to reinforce the application of knowledge and techniques while working with youth

Workplace Skills: A section of tips, tools and other resources to support effective workplace practices, including making task lists, setting and keeping priorities, preparing for and participating in supervisory or organization staff meetings, using workplace technology, understanding employment policies and procedures, and many others

Appendix D:

BEST YDPA
Technical Assistance Tools

Guide for Collecting Local Input on YDPA Program Elements—Key Topics

NTI developed and distributed to BEST site leaders *Establishing BEST YDPAs: A Guide for Collecting Local Input* (Local Input Guide). Based upon an analysis of DOL's template for National Guideline Standards, and divided into 12 sections pertaining to key program design elements, the *Local Input Guide* included questions intended to facilitate BEST site leaders' discussions and assessment activities with local stakeholders. BEST site leaders were encouraged to use the *Local Input Guide* to support structured conversations and assessment activities with key stakeholders during a local assessment/review period.

The 12 YDPA program design topics addressed in the *Local Input Guide* were:

- BEST YDPA Sponsor and Employer Responsibilities
- Supervision Responsibilities
- Minimum Apprentice Qualifications
- Affirmative Action Plan
- Recruitment Process
- Selection Process
- Hours of Work
- Probationary Period
- On-the-Job Training Program
- Related Instruction
- Wage Standard and Progression
- Management Information Systems

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BEST YDPA On-the-Job Training Program Design—Guiding Questions

To design the BEST YDPA On-the-Job Training Program, NTI formed and convened an OJT Program Committee with representatives from the Hampton/Newport News and New York BEST sites. The OJT Program Committee was charged with conceptualizing an On-the-Job Training Program and contributing to the development of training products that could be piloted by all local BEST Apprenticeship Programs. In a one-and-a-half-day meeting, the committee grappled with a range of program and product design questions, listed below.

The meeting yielded good results that advanced the development of the BEST YDPA on-the-job training program design. The committee reached consensus on the categories of activities that BEST apprentices would likely undertake on the job to develop specific competencies and the categories of activities that journeyworkers would undertake in their roles as supervisors and coaches of apprentices.

Apprentice Target Population

Picture your intended target population of apprentices. What is their age range? Their previous experience and education? Their background? What skills do they have? What are their attributes and aspirations?

Why is the apprenticeship credential especially suited to their strengths and needs? Given these characteristics, what are the implications for purpose and design of an on-the-job training program?

Journeyworker Target Population

Picture your intended target population of journeyworkers. What are the characteristics of this journeyworker population? What is their previous experience and education? What skills do they have? What are their attributes and aspirations?

Why is the journeyworker role especially suited to their strengths and needs? Given these characteristics, what are the implications for the purpose and design of a journeyworker training program?

Competencies

What competencies represent a "foundational level" and can be addressed through an apprenticeship on-the-job training experience targeting entry-level workers?

What is beyond the scope of apprenticeship?

What "progression" should guide apprentices' development of competencies? In other words, which competencies should be developed early in the program, which toward the middle or end of the apprentice's term, and which should be ongoing? In your opinion, how should the focus or intensity of activities change from segment to segment?

OJT Activities

What activities, projects, assignments, or opportunities do you think will promote apprentices' development of competencies on the job?

Which activities are already part of an apprentice's job? Which are "add-on" requirements for apprenticeship?

For each essential OJT activity, what are the journeyworkers' associated responsibilities and tasks? What are the journeyworkers' other general responsibilities or tasks associated with managing the on-the-job training program?

Which activities are already part of a journeyworker's job? Which are "add-on" requirements that would be new under apprenticeship?

Assessment

What specific, observable, measurable indicators will provide evidence of apprentices' development of core competencies? What strategies can journeyworkers use to evaluate apprentices' progress in developing these core competencies?

How will the journeyworker know if an apprentice is progressing in developing skills/attributes/knowledge/abilities in a specific competency area, e.g., by observing the apprentice (doing what)?...Assessing the apprentice (how and on what)?... Documenting the apprentices' progress (on what)?... Collecting evidence from young people and supervisors (what kind of evidence)?"

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BEST YDPA Program Marketing—Guiding Questions

To facilitate the development of BEST YDPA marketing materials, NTI created a Marketing and Outreach Committee that included representatives from the Kansas City and Springfield BEST sites. The Marketing and Outreach committee was charged with conceptualizing strategies and products that would facilitate BEST sites' local marketing and promotion of BEST Apprenticeship Programs to two audiences—prospective employers and prospective apprentices.

Committee members began their work by responding, in structured interviews, to key questions about the characteristics of employer and apprentice target audiences, message points, and effective channels of communication. These questions are listed below. The Committee then conceptualized marketing materials and strategies that would help BEST site leaders convey essential information to prospective employers and apprentices about the BEST Apprenticeship Program and help prospective employers and apprentices assess their interest and readiness to participate in the BEST YDPA program.

Apprentices

Picture the apprentices you'll target—i.e., the individuals who will likely apply to participate in the YDPA pilot. What are the demographics and characteristics of this population?

In your opinion, what will make these prospective apprentices "jump" at the chance to participate in the BEST YDPA program? What would give them pause?

Imagine leading an introductory session or YDPA orientation for prospective apprentices who are considering applying or want to know more about your YDPA program. What information would be important to provide? What questions would be on their minds?

Suppose you could give prospective YDPA apprentices materials or resources that would answer their pressing questions about your BEST YDPA program. What would you provide? What would you want them to do next?

When individuals in this target audience of prospective apprentices need information about the opportunities and issues that impact their lives, where do you think they turn first for information? What do you think are their best sources of information?

Employers

Now, picture the organizations that you hope will buy-in and agree to participate in the YDPA pilot as employers of apprentices. Approximately how many organizations make up this target population? What are the characteristics of these organizations?

In your opinion, what will make employers "jump" at the chance to participate in BEST YDPA program? What will give employers pause?

Suppose you could give prospective YDPA employers materials or resources that would answer their pressing questions about your BEST YDPA program. What would you provide? What would you want them to do next?

How do you already communicate with or market your work to these organizations? How often? ... In what ways? ... For what purposes?... Have you found certain strategies or channels to be more effective than others?

When these employers need information about the opportunities and issues that will impact their organizations, where do you think they turn first for information? What do you think are their best sources of information?

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Wage Data Worksheet

Below is a wage data worksheet, used by some BEST site leaders during the BEST YDPA planning process. Site leaders requested wage data from participating employers, entered it on the worksheet, then calculated the average low-end and high-end wages across all of the employers. This process produced a "back-of-the-envelope" market rate for entry level (apprentice) and experienced (journeyworker) youth workers across participating employers and enabled each BEST site to determine whether an apprentice who started in the entry-level wage range would reach at least the "low-end" of the average journeyworker's wage range among participating employers.

1. Entry-level wage. What is the approximate wage range (starting wage) for entry level employees currently working at the organizations where apprentices are likely to be placed?:

❑	Employer #1.	Low end: _____	High-end:	_____
❑	Employer #2.	Low end: _____	High-end:	_____
❑	Employer #3.	Low end: _____	High-end:	_____
❑	Employer #4.	Low end: _____	High-end:	_____
	Average:	_____		_____

Do you and local stakeholders think the averages represent an entry-level wage range that can be piloted? Why or why not?

2. Journeyworker wage. What is the approximate wage range for employees who would qualify as journeyworkers and are currently working at the organizations where apprentices are likely to be placed?:

❑	Employer #1.	Low end: _____	High-end:	_____
❑	Employer #2.	Low end: _____	High-end:	_____
❑	Employer #3.	Low end: _____	High-end:	_____
❑	Employer #4.	Low end: _____	High-end:	_____
	Average:	_____		_____

Do you and local stakeholders think the averages represent an ending wage range for apprentices? In other words, after two years of wage progression, is it likely that an apprentice who starts at the entry-level wage will reach at least the "low-end" of the journeyworker's wage range? Why or why not?

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Proposed Local Assessment Process and Information Management & Reporting System
"Complete Model"

This tentative framework shows the local data collection, management, and reporting activities that could be implemented in all BEST YDPA programs and generate data about apprentices' progress and YDPA program quality and impact—at the employer level, community level, and national level.

Forms	Step 1 Application	Step 2 Interview	Step 3 Acceptance / Rejection	Step 4 Enrollment	Steps 5-10 Apprenticeship Progress Points	Step 11 Completion	Step 12 Completion + 6 months	Step 13 Completion + 12 months
1. Consent Form	Informed Consent							
2. Application Form	Numbers and Demographics of Applicants Summary of qualifications							
3. Interview Protocol		#s and demographics of interviewees	Brief summary of interview & conclusions					
4. Apprentice Contract				#s and demographics				
5. Time Tracker					Hours logged per segment			
6. JW Assessment Tool					Knowledge, competencies gained per segment			
7. RTI Records					Grades, etc. per quarter or semester			
8. Cumulative Portfolio					Cumulative evidence, e.g. samples of work, testimonials, resume, assembled by apprentice			
9. Perfor-mance Review					Wage progression Job Assignment Promotion, Demotion, Layoff, Termination Annual review			
10. Completer or Exit						#s/demographics of completers, Reasons for termination		
11. Follow-Up Protocol							Status Position Location Wages	Status Position Location Wages

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Sample Budget Template for BEST YDPA Implementation

NTI developed a sample budget template for BEST YDPA implementation and disseminated this template to BEST site leaders for their review and use in funding proposals. The template includes categories and line items that will likely be associated with ongoing implementation.

Personnel & Fringe
YDPA Program Oversight .....
YDPA Program Coordination & Management .....
YDPA Program Administrative & Program Support .....

Consultants
Database, MIS, Evaluation consultant .....
Grantwriting/Fundraising (if needed) .....

Travel & Transportation
Local Mileage/Subway/Parking--BEST Sites .....
Local Mileage/Subway/Parking--JW & App. .....
National Training of Journeyworkers (cost-share) .....

Other Direct Program Costs
Apprentice stipends & scholarships .....
Employer stipends or incentives .....
Journeyworker stipends or incentives .....
Annual Program Orientation .....
Semi-Annual Stakeholder Committee Meetings .....
TA Meetings for Journeyworkers .....
TA Meetings for Employers .....
Annual Recognition Program .....

Other Direct Costs
Communications (phone, fax, internet) .....
Program Supplies .....
General Postage/Delivery/Courier .....
General Printing/Reproduction .....
National Training of Journeyworkers Registration Fee .....
OJT Materials .....
Program Marketing & Advertising .....
Software--Database/MIS for data collection .....

Indirect Costs .....

TOTAL PROPOSED PROGRAM BUDGET $_____

U.S. Department of Labor Briefing—Topics of Discussion

In January 2003, NTI had an opportunity to brief representatives from the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Office of Youth Services (OYS) Office of Apprenticeship Training and Employment Labor Standards (OATELS) on the status of BEST YDPA programs. The briefing, called *Promoting Positive Youth Outcomes and Industry Standards through BEST YDPA programs* addressed the following questions:

- What are the key features of the BEST Apprenticeship Program, and what field experience and research provide the rationale for incorporating these features?
- What competencies will apprentices develop in BEST Apprenticeship Programs that will promote positive outcomes in young people?
- What national programs and activities were implemented to promote quality and consistency of implementation of BEST Apprenticeship Programs across all BEST sites?
- How did local sponsors garner buy-in and participation from local youth-serving organizations?
- What is the current status of program registration, participation, and recruitment by BEST affiliates, local youth-serving organizations, journeyworkers, and apprentices?
- What will administration and management of the BEST Apprenticeship Program look like locally and nationally?
- What are the plans for replicating BEST Apprenticeship Programs nationally?
- How will enrollment be expanded in programs that are already registered?
- What are the preliminary estimates for participation, enrollment, and impacts on young people?

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BEST Apprenticeship Program—Fact Sheet

The national BEST Apprenticeship Program is the youth development practitioner apprenticeship (YDPA) program implemented by local BEST intermediary organizations in partnership with the National Training Institute for Community Youth Work (NTI).

BEST Apprenticeship Programs provide apprentice youth workers with more than 3,800 hours of supervised on-the-job training based on youth development principles and require approximately 350 hours of related coursework at higher education institutions. Upon completion of two-year BEST Apprenticeship Program, apprentices receive a Department of Labor certificate, signaling their readiness and qualifications to work directly with young people in youth programs.

BEST Apprenticeship programs promote apprentices' development of a foundational level of proficiency in core competency areas for the youth work profession. BEST Apprenticeship Programs are rigorous because they require apprentices to systematically develop attitudes, knowledge, abilities, skills, and work experience through carefully designed on-the-job training activities that are integrated into their work schedules and become more complex over time.

Journeyworkers, or skilled workers, monitor and evaluate apprentices' progress according to objective criteria and provide ongoing coaching and supervision. BEST Apprenticeship Programs also use common resources—such as the *On-the-Job Training Guide for BEST Apprentices* and *On-the-Job Training Guide for BEST Journeyworkers*.

BEST intermediary organizations register BEST Apprenticeship Programs with their state registration agencies, recruit participants, coordinate the delivery of on-the-job training with employers (youth-serving organizations) and related instruction with colleges, monitor program quality and impact, and provide technical assistance to local participants.

BEST Apprenticeship Programs are currently being planned and implemented in eight cities, including: Chicago (IL); Hampton/Newport News (VA); Kansas City (MO); New Haven (CT); New York City (NY); Philadelphia (PA); Springfield (MA); and Washington (DC).

The BEST Apprenticeship Program was developed collaboratively by leaders from the following organizations, with funding and technical assistance from the U.S. Department of Labor: Alternatives, Inc. (Hampton, VA); Partners for a Healthier Community (Springfield, MA); Youth Development Institute of the Fund for the City of New York (New York City, NY); YouthNet of Greater Kansas City (Kansas City, MO); and the National Training Institute for Community Youth Work at the Academy for Educational Development (Washington, DC).

For more information about the National Training Institute for Community Youth Work, contact (202) 884-8334 or nti@aed.org. Information is also available online at http://www.nti.aed.org.

Appendix E:

U.S. Department of Labor and National YDPA Clearinghouse Resources

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP: A SOLUTION TO THE SKILLS SHORTAGE

WHAT IS REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP?

Registered Apprenticeship is a training system that produces highly skilled workers to meet the demands of employers competing in a global economy. A proven strategy, Registered Apprenticeship ensures quality training by combining on-the-job training with theoretical and practical classroom instruction to prepare exceptional workers for American industry. The process of apprenticeship program registration with Federal and State government agencies is standards-based. It is a process designed to ensure that working apprentices, program sponsors, and the general public can gain a clear understanding of the training content and the measures that are in place to ensure ongoing quality.

WHO DOES REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP SERVE?

In the U.S. today, some 37,000 program sponsors, representing over a quarter million employers, industries and companies, offer registered apprenticeship training to approximately 440,000 apprentices. These training programs serve a diverse population which includes minorities, women, youth, and dislocated workers.

WHAT INDUSTRIES CURRENTLY PARTICIPATE IN REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP?

- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Telecommunications
- Information technology/networking
- Service and Retail industries
- Health care
- The military
- Public utilities
- Public sector

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS?

For employers, benefits include:

- Skilled workers trained to industry/employer specifications to produce quality results
- Reduced turnover
- Pipeline for new skilled workers
- Reduced worker compensation costs due to an emphasis on safety training.

For apprentices and journeyworkers, benefits include:

- Jobs that usually pay higher wages
- Higher quality of life and skills versatility
- Portable credentials recognized nationally and often globally
- Opportunity for college credit and future degrees.

For the nation, benefits include:

- Highly skilled workforce
- Increased competitive edge in global economy
- System to contribute to and sustain economic growth
- Lessened need to import skilled workers

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WHO OPERATES AND PAYS FOR REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING?

Registered Apprenticeship programs are operated by both the private and public sectors. Sponsors include employers, employer associations and joint labor/management organizations. Program sponsors pay most of the training costs while simultaneously increasing the wages of the apprentices as their skill levels increase. Registered Apprenticeship training can be competency based or time based with training generally ranging from one to six years depending on the needs of the program sponsor. For the apprentice, this translates into an educational benefit worth $40,000 to $150,000. Because the training content is driven by industry needs, the end result of apprenticeship programs is extremely well trained workers whose skills are in high demand.

WHAT ROLE DOES GOVERNMENT PLAY IN REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP?

The National Apprenticeship Act authorizes the Federal government, in cooperation with the States, to oversee the nation's apprenticeship system. The U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship Training, Employer and Labor Services/Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training and individual State Apprenticeship Agencies are responsible for:

- Registering apprenticeship programs that meet Federal and State standards
- Protecting the safety and welfare of apprentices
- Issuing nationally recognized and portable Certificates of Completion to apprentices
- Promoting the development of new programs through marketing and technical assistance
- Assuring that all programs provide high quality training
- Assuring that all programs produce skilled competent workers.

HOW MUCH DOES GOVERNMENT SPEND ON APPRENTICESHIP?

As of 1996 the Federal government invested approximately $16 million for administration of the apprenticeship system, with States contributing roughly another $20 million. Thus, the total public investment amounts to an estimated $36 million - a modest $110 per apprentice.

WHAT IS THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT FOR THIS PUBLIC EXPENDITURE?

Because apprentices pay income taxes on their wages, it is estimated that every $1 the Federal government invests yields more than $50 in revenues. If all 440,000 apprentices earn an average annual income of $15,000 (a low average), this generates nearly $1 billion in Federal tax revenues alone, a significant return on Federal and State investments. The government's return on investment in registered apprenticeship clearly outperforms other types of government-sponsored job training programs.

Apprenticeship is a proven training strategy that improves the skills of the American workforce and enhances the efficiency and productivity of American industries. Investment in the U.S. registered apprenticeship system represents a wise use of government dollars, paying for itself many times over. America faces a critical shortage of skilled workers, and expanding apprenticeship opportunities offers an effective approach to meet the needs of the U.S. Industry and citizens in search of high quality and good jobs.

For more information including a list of the over 850 Apprenticable Occupations and contact information by region and state visit www.doleta.gov/atels_bat or call 1-877-US-2-JOBS(1-877-872-5627).

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Apprenticeship Marketing Materials—Department of Labor

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Employment and Training Administration (ETA), Office of Apprenticeship Training, and Employer Labor Services (OATELS) offers marketing materials including a fact sheet, brochures, and an interactive CD to help promote the establishment of apprenticeship programs locally. Below is a sampling of available resources.

Fact Sheet

Registered Apprenticeship: A Solution to the Skills Shortage

Brochures

Registered Apprenticeship: Building a Skilled Workforce in the 21st Century

Registered Apprenticeship: High Wage, High Skill, Career Opportunities in the 21st Century

Information Technology/CD

Registered Apprenticeship: Building a Skilled Workforce in the 21st Century

For more information about these materials, contact:

U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration
Office of Apprenticeship Training, and Employer Labor Services
Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210

Telephone: 1-877-US-2JOBS
URL: http://www.doleta.gov/atels_bat/

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YDPA Implementation Grant Awardees 2001-2002

Alternatives, Inc.
2013 Cunningham Drive, #104
Hampton, VA 23666

Chicago Youth Agency Partnership
200 North Michigan Avenue, Suite #400
Chicago, IL 60601

City of Cincinnati
19 West Elder Street
Cincinnati, OH 45210

Goodwill Industries International, Inc.
9200 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20814

Greater Philadelphia Federation of Settlements
215 South Broad Street, 5th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107-5326

National Council on Employment Policy
Sar Levitan Center for Social Policy Studies
Institute for Policy Studies
John Hopkins University
Wyman Building, 5th Floor
3400 N. Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21218

National 4-H Council
7100 Connecticut Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

National Training Institute for Community
Youth Work/AED
1825 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20009

Opportunities Industrialization Center of
America, Inc.
1415 North Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19122

Private Industry Council, Inc.
101 W. Pleasant Street, Suite 201
Milwaukee, WI 53212

Progressive Training Association, Inc.
965 Fairfield Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06605

SER Jobs for Progress National, Inc.
1925 W. John Carpenter Fwy.
Suite 575
Irving, TX 75063

Urban League of Broward County, Inc.
11 NW 36 Avenue
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33311

West Fresno Schools Foundation
P.O. Box 1604
Fresno, CA 93716-1604

Worksystems, Inc.
711 SW Alder Street, Suite 200
Portland, OR 97205

YMCA OF THE USA
101 North Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60606

YouthBuild USA
58 Day Street, 3rd Floor
Somerville, MA 02144

See also:
2001 Awardees: http://wdsc.doleta.gov/sga/awards/01-103award.asp
2002 Awardees: http://wdsc.doleta.gov/sga/awards/02-110award.asp

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National YDPA Clearinghouse Resources

In 2001, DOL designated the Sar Levitan Center for Social Policy Studies, at John Hopkins University's Institute for Policy Studies, to serve as the National YDPA Clearinghouse in order to facilitate the development and implementation of Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship (YDPA) Programs across the nation. Below is a sampling of resources available through the Clearinghouse.

- *Apprenticeship for Youth Workers: Why? and How?* An explanation of the YDPA education and training program for youth workers, including the Related Instruction and On-The-Job Training components. (Microsoft Word document)

- *Guidebook for Building a Skilled Youth Development Workforce:* In-depth guide for starting a YDPA program (Web page). Also available as a pdf file (897 KB).

- *Building a Skilled Youth Development Workforce* (CD ROM companion to the *Guidebook*)

- *Building a Sustainable System*: Guidance on cooperating with key players to develop common goals, workplan and outcomes for a YDPA program. (PowerPoint presentation)

- *Benefits to Employers, Apprentice, and the Youth They Serve*: A list of benefits that YDPA programs can deliver to employers, youth workers and youth.(Web page)

For more information, contact:

The Sar Levitan Center
Johns Hopkins University / Institute for Policy Studies
3400 North Charles Street, Wyman Building, 5th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21218

410-516-7169 Phone
410-516-4775 Fax

www.ydpaclearinghouse.org

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Finding Registered YDPA Programs

Below is information on how to find registered Youth Development Apprenticeship programs locally. To find out whether there is a registered Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship program in your community, contact your State Apprenticeship Council, the National YDPA Clearinghouse, or the U.S. Department of Labor.

To contact your State Apprenticeship Council:

Look in the blue pages of your telephone directory for contact information.

Web: http://www.nastad.net/index.cfm?page=3

To contact the National YDPA Clearinghouse:

The Sar Levitan Center for Social Policy
Johns Hopkins University, Institute for Policy Studies
3400 N. Charles Street
Wyman Bldg., 5th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21218

410-516-7169 Voice
410-516-4775 Fax
E-mail: levitan@jhu.edu
Web: http://www.ydpaclearinghouse.org/

To contact the U.S. Department of Labor:

U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration
Office of Apprenticeship Training
Employer and Labor Services
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210

Voice: 1.877.US.2JOBS
Web: www.doleta.gov/atels_bat

Attachment F:

National BEST Network

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National BEST Initiative Overview

In 1996, the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds launched the National BEST Initiative to address the lack of training and professional development opportunities for youth workers across the country. "BEST," which stands for "Building Exemplary Systems for Training Youth Workers," helps communities establish local systems of training, education, and professional development for youth workers. The National Training Institute for Community Youth Work (NTI) at the Academy for Educational Development (AED) became the national technical assistance provider to the initiative in 1997. The Wallace Funds provided national support to NTI and modest local support to seven "lead intermediary organizations" in 1996 and eight more in 1999. The BEST sites in the original cohorts include Boston, MA; Chicago, IL; Hampton, VA; Jacksonville, FL; Kansas City, MO; Milwaukee, WI; Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN; New Haven, CT; New York City, NY; Philadelphia, PA; Pinellas County, FL; Portland, OR; San Francisco, CA; Springfield, MA; and Washington, DC.

BEST sites work toward establishing a coordinated system of youth worker professional development, focusing initially on delivering the *Advancing Youth Development* course and convening youth workers. During the start-up phase, BEST sites focus on three priorities: marketing BEST youth worker professional development and *Advancing Youth Development* (AYD) training to a broad cross-section of local youth-serving organizations, youth workers, and other stakeholders in order to cultivate buy-in and participation; delivering the seven session, 28-hour AYD course to youth workers and documenting results; and convening youth workers to reinforce their knowledge and competencies.

With NTI's guidance and BEST site leaders' experience, it takes approximately three years for local intermediaries to build a solid foundation—including relationships with leaders in the youth-serving sector, a track record in delivering high quality courses, and an infrastructure that includes staff expertise and project management capabilities—that can serve as a basis for expanding programs offered through the BEST system. Many established BEST sites are now also sponsoring apprenticeship programs to create a formal entry point to the profession, and working with higher education institutions to offer youth work certificate and degree programs. Across BEST sites, the array of BEST training, education, and professional development programs—including apprenticeship and college-based programs—are premised upon AYD and are the building blocks of a local and national credentialing system for youth workers.

Today, 18 cities participate in the national BEST network, together sharing a commitment to the youth development philosophy and using common training materials and approaches in their training and education programs for youth workers. And, NTI is currently in the process of bringing BEST to more communities based upon good results and a commitment to respond to increasing demand. In addition to promoting important changes in youth workers' practices, the BEST Initiative strengthens local youth-serving sectors.

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BEST Systems in Urban Areas
2002-2004

● = Current and/or Planned BEST Site

◉ = BEST YDPA Site

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Attachment G:

National BEST Training Programs

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Advancing Youth Development: A Curriculum for Training Youth Workers

Curriculum Overview

Curriculum Goals:

The curriculum has four broad learning goals:

- Participants will gain a familiarity with the youth development approach and use this approach to explore, share, and learn new strategies for working with young people.
- Participants will strengthen their ability to communicate their ideas, expertise and experience to their constituencies: board members, families, co-workers, community leaders, and youth.
- Participants will discuss practical strategies for integrating a youth development approach into their programs.
- Participants will form an informal network and become ongoing resources to each other.

Outline of Curriculum Sessions: This 28-hour curriculum is composed of seven sessions. Each session introduces participants to a youth development "concept" and facilitates shared learning of the practical applications.

Session 1	Youth Worker Self-Assessment & Introduction to the Youth Development Approach
Session 2	Youth Outcomes and Expectations
Session 3	Opportunities & Supports
Session 4	Core Competencies of Youth Workers
Session 5	Cultural Assumptions about Young People: From Adultism to Caring
Session 6	Strategies of Youth Participation
Session 7	Group Presentations, Graduation, and Celebration

Recommended Delivery of Curriculum: The National Training Institute for Community Youth Work (NTI) recommends that NTI-certified training systems deliver this curriculum using a seven-session format, during the daytime, either once-per-week for seven weeks or twice-per-week for three-and-a-half weeks. The most common days in a seven-session format are Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Delivery of this curriculum may vary between training systems, however, NTI encourages training program managers to assess community needs and capacities before considering adaptations.

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Supervising Youth Development Practice:
A Facilitator's Guide for Training Supervisors of Youth Workers

Curriculum Overview

Curriculum Goals:

The *Supervising Youth Development Practice: A Facilitator's Guide for Training Supervisors of Youth Workers* curriculum trains supervisors of youth workers in the principles and practices of youth development and "best practices" in supervising youth development work. The curriculum also supports youth workers by training their supervisors on how to successfully supervise youth development work and promote youth development policies within their organizations.

The curriculum has four broad learning goals:

- Supervisors will gain an understanding of the key concepts in *Advancing Youth Development: A Curriculum for Training Youth Workers* (AYD).
- Supervisors will learn strategies for supervising youth development practice.
- Supervisors will learn strategies for integrating a facilitative approach into their supervision of youth workers.
- Supervisors will learn how to use the youth development approach to strengthen their programs and organizations.

Outline of Curriculum Sessions: This 15-hour curriculum is composed of five sessions and is based on sessions from AYD.

Session 1	Youth Development Key Concepts
Session 2	Youth Worker Core Competencies
Session 3	Opportunities and Supports
Session 4	Cultural Assumptions
	Youth Participation
Session 5	Outcome Indicators
	Supervisor Core Competencies

Recommended Delivery of Curriculum: The National Training Institute for Community Youth Work (NTI) recommends that NTI-certified training systems deliver this curriculum using a five-session format, once a week over three hours, for five consecutive weeks. Delivery of this curriculum may vary between training systems, however, NTI encourages training program managers to assess community needs and capacities before considering adaptations.

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BEST Strengthens Youth Work Practice: An Evaluation of Building Exemplary Systems for Training Youth Workers (BEST)

Key Findings

Purpose: To answer the question, "What impact can a local system of youth worker professional development have on a youth-serving sector?" the Academy for Educational Development (AED) Center for School and Community Services (CSCS) conducted a two-year national, evaluating the influence of the National Training Institute for Community Youth Work's (NTI) national BEST Initiative on youth workers, youth-serving organizations, and the communities within NTI's network of 15 BEST sites.

Study Methodology: The study assessed the effectiveness of the BEST approach to youth worker professional development primarily by measuring the impact that training in *Advancing Youth Development: A Curriculum for Training Youth Workers* (AYD) had on the way youth workers serve young people and the benefits throughout their community. The following research activities were conducted:

- A review of participant data and rates of participation at local BEST sites
- A pre- and post- survey of youth workers participating in AYD training
- Interviews with key stakeholders (funders, local planners, agency directors, etc.)
- Open-ended reflection logs recorded by youth workers
- Telephone interviews with youth workers
- Interviews/surveys of BEST site project directors

Key Findings

Impact on Youth Worker Practice

- Three-fourths of the 242 post-survey respondents indicated that the training had a "great deal" or "good amount" of impact on their practices.

- 90% of youth workers completing the post survey said the AYD training had an impact on their practice of identifying their own strengths and areas needing improvement.

- The study illustrated a shift in the practice paradigm from adult-centered to youth-centered programming. This shift was summarized by one youth worker who reported that he *went from wanting to do programming for youth to trying to do programming with youth.*

- Through the telephone interviews, 41 of the 43 youth workers reported that they felt the training had a positive impact on their work with youth.

Impact on Organizations

- According to a community stakeholder, one result of *BEST* is that, *Organizations now have the tools and resources to work with kids. They are better-managed agencies and there is a whole community awareness that youth have assets.*

- When asked about the impact of the *BEST* Initiative on organizations, stakeholders agreed that the initiative helped foster networking and cross-agency collaboration. Specifically, *We now engage in more collaboration. There is a broadened perspective of organizations and a universal language.*

- Over two-thirds of the youth worker survey respondents reported that the *AYD* training had an impact on their organization overall.

- In a log, one youth worker explained the result of the training on her organization - *It created a common vocabulary and concepts for co-workers. It serves as a base for working with the youth.*

- The need for additional organizational supports was expressed by many youth workers, including one who wrote in his log, *In order to use what I have learned in the AYD training, I will need supportive supervision, cooperation and continuous training on youth development.*

Impact on Professionalizing the Field

- Overwhelmingly, youth workers agreed that courses, certificates and degrees increase the professional status of youth worker because *a lot of youth workers don't get recognized at the same level as other professions related to young people.*

- Among other suggestions for increasing the status of the field were: competitive salaries and benefits; networking; and public education. One specific suggestion was for, *Either a national network or a recognized spokesperson that could promote what youth work is and why it's important.*

Ordering Information: Results of this BEST evaluation are available in two versions, a 54-page full report and a 10-page summary report. The full report documents, in detail, survey data and provides direct quotes from youth workers who completed AYD trainings. The summary report is a synopsis of this information. Both publications are available for purchase by contacting Angela Thompson at NTI (athompso@aed.org; 202-884-8936). The full version is downloadable in PDF from NTI's web site at www.nti.aed.org.

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AED	Academy for Educational Development
ATR	Apprenticeship Technical Representative
AYD	*Advancing Youth Development: A Curriculum for Training Youth Workers*
BAT	Bureau of Apprenticeship Training
BEST	Building Exemplary Systems for Training Youth Workers
CBO	Community-based organization
DOL	U.S. Department of Labor
NIWL	National Institute for Work and Learning
NTI	National Training Institute for Community Youth Work
OATELS	Office of Apprenticeship Training, Employer and Labor Services, Department of Labor
OJT	On-the-Job Training
OYS	Office of Youth Services, Department of Labor
RI	Related Instruction
SAC	State Apprenticeship Council
SSR	Site Status Report
TA	Technical Assistance
TOJW	National Training of Journeyworkers Program
WIA	Workforce Investment Act
YDPA	Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship
YSO	Youth-serving organization

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